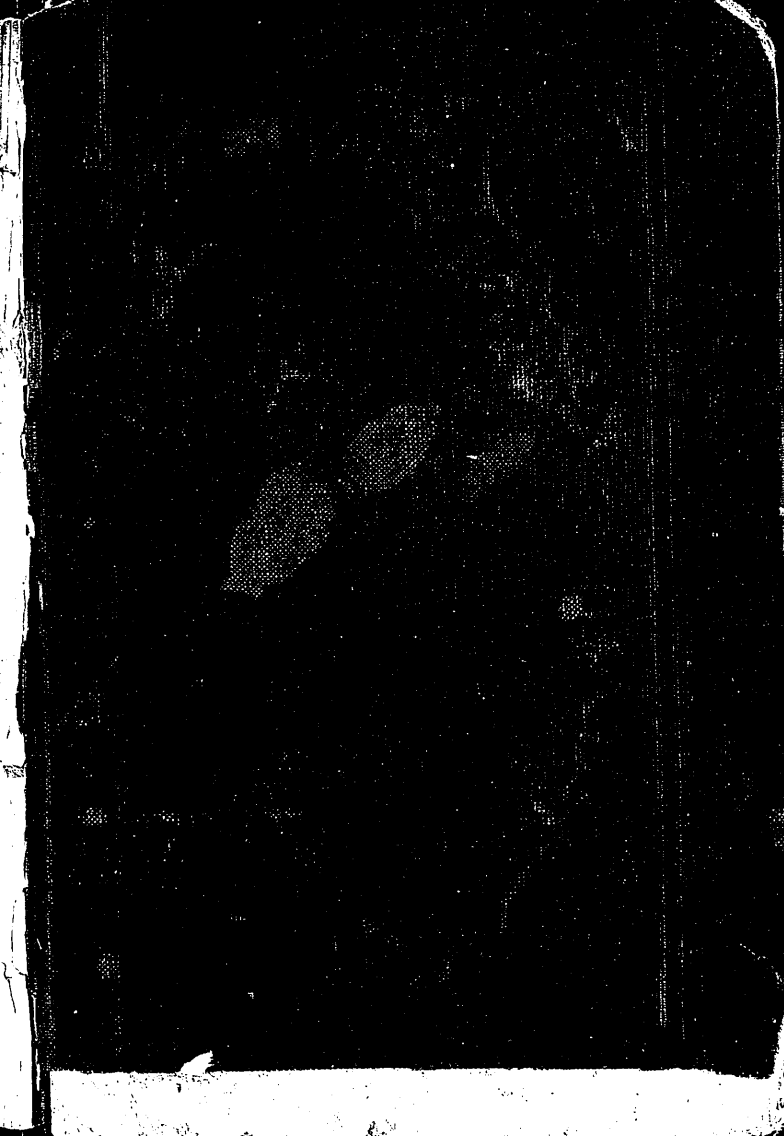




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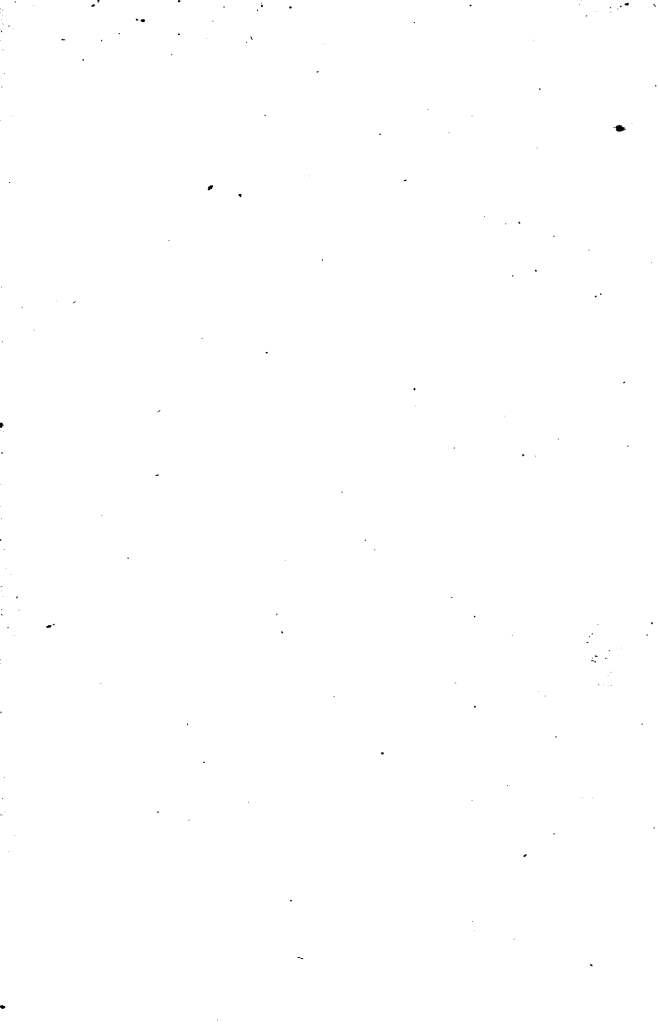
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MEMOIR OF NOEL:

AND

SERMONS.



A BRIEF MEMOIR
OF THE
REV. SAMUEL AYRES NOEL,
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL
OF THE
CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH:
WITH
S E R M O N S

ON IMPORTANT PRACTICAL SUBJECTS.

BY REV. LABAN JONES,
OF JEFFERSON COUNTY, KY.

As a man thinketh in his heart so is he.---Prov. 23: 7. Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me; and ye will not come to me that ye might have life.---John 5: 39, 40.
Truth will prevall to honor or sahme us.

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PREFACE.

WE live in an age of most majestic progressive arts; when, in all secular senses, the world is prosperous. Even the desert regions are being transformed into the most lovely scenes of civilization and husbandry; and, with the slightest-exception, the entire inhabitants of the earth have been copiously favored with peace and prosperity. The Church has also had her increase, in mere numbers and outward advantages; yet we are compelled most deeply to feel the great want of suitable zeal, in the weightier interests of the gospel, and to have fears of most lamentable superficiality in truly pious attainments and evangelical character and principles. A very unhappy amount of sectarian disunion and rivalry consequently exists, while there are accumulating most burdensome clogs to the wheels of Zion, in the forms of pride, covetousness, ignorance, error, and "spiritual wickedness in high places."

Should we not endeavor most diligently to search for the cause of this unfortunate state of things? Such effects surely cannot result from trivial causes. That the ALMIGHTY and his great plans and purpo-

ses are eternally and unchangably the same, we cannot question; the cause of all sin, declension, and apostacy, must be sought elsewhere, than in the agency and operations of Jehovah. There is nothing more irreverent than to trace them as the results necessitated by his plans. In human delinquencies some where, the cause is, doubtless, to be found. We do not expect to find it entirely with the irreligious, nor with any one denomination of Christians, but would unite with all in mutual acknowledgments of a due share of the blame, in sincere lamentations over the unhappy facts, and our best contributions in a joint effort to effect a remedy.

Is it not admissable for us to suspect the truly evangelical character of our own modes of operations in common with others, in attempts of a most sincere and laborious kind to promote the cause of Christ? Is it not much to be feared that there have been irreparable losses to the Church and souls of men from the neglect of chatechetical introductions into a knowledge of God, and the elementary principles of His government, with the great doctrines of the cross, and the terms upon which God can be just and the justifier of guilty men, upon principles strictly equitable to the universe of beings, and equally creditable to every attribute and perfection of his own nature and government? Is it not possible that the Church has been practising upon theories of conversion, not as clearly and fairly deduced from the fountain of truth as the vital importance

of that subject demands? We think it possible, at least, that even in the popular and highly approved theology of the present age, it may be a great error to attach so inconsiderable comparative importance to such moral attainments as are practicable, either antecedent or subsequent to regeneration; and that we should ascribe every thing that is felicitous in our future prospects to the occurrences and exercises of a few moments, and that often in the midst of great perturbation and excitement. That faith, justification, regeneration, and adoption, with many concomitant blessings should all be obtained at the same instant, and in so miscellaneous and undigested a manner, that even the receiver should not be sensible of any regularity or order in the manner of receiving such invaluable blessings, and that one's whole title to, and principle qualifications for future bliss, should be referred to the acquisitions of these moments, too irrespective of after improvements and development of character. Even notorious liars, misers, hypocrites, worldlings, tattlers, and drunkards, speak with ostentatious confidence of their great acquisitions of religion, on special occasions, while their lives manifest almost any thing else than Christian sensibilities and devotion to the service of God.

The opposite extreme to this is, perhaps, the most to be suspected for soundness and safety, which is, everlasting indecision, and almost entire insensibility in religion, rendering void and nugatory the pre-

cious doctrines of gracious assurances so intimately connected with the Christian's spiritual enjoyments and heavenly hopes. They should labor for heart-felt assuring evidence of having passed from death unto life, in their love to God and their brethren, with ardent desires to have the Spirit of Christ, and to do his work, so as also to say, that "we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." 2 Corinthians v. i.

Under the influence of these feelings, and with a view to elicit thorough reflection and investigation on these particulars, many portions of the following memoir and sermons have been written.

The much lamented subject of the memoir died in his twenty-seventh year. His short life and limited opportunities were such as not to call for more extended remarks. His brilliancy had just begun to manifest itself when Heaven took him from persecution and care, as one "of whom the world was not worthy." His value was not known or appreciated until his friends felt the heavy stroke of their bereavement. We publish herewith the only manuscript sermon he left, on the call to the ministry, prepared for the special benefit of his brethren of Kentucky Presbytery, to whose careful and prayerful perusal we affectionately recommend it, as containing a clear, cogent, and copious expression of what we conceive to be the Bible view, as appre-

hended by the Cumberland Presbyterian Church on that important subject.

The other sermons herewith presented have been prepared with a special view to what the writer conceives to be the wants of the community. An apology for their length, if one should be required, it is hoped, will be found in the importance of the subjects, on which, to speak at all, it seemed best to speak out fully, and to prove and substantiate as amply as practicable the positions claimed.

We can but expect that our friends, and much more our enemies, will discover many imperfections in our composition. We have been laboring to form the habit of trying to do our best in all our efforts; if this is thought a feeble and faulty one by some, we hope they will be indulgent, and pray for us, that we may do better the next effort we make. We are satisfied of one thing in the premises, which is, that we have constantly aimed to do good; of our success or failure, others must tell in days to come. May the Lord bless the right and overrule the wrong and to His name be all the praise.

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A MEMOIR
OF
REV. SAMUEL AYRES NOEL.

Being requested by Kentucky Presbytery and our brethren in the ministry to write a biographical sketch of our lamented brother Noel, there is but a solitary consideration which prevents a prompt and cheerful attention to the request; that is, a distrust of being able to present as clear and forcible a view as we should of those distinguished traits of noble and useful powers so brightly developed in his short youthful career; in which he had barely time allowed to look around him, in this awfully eventful world, and form a few acquaintances, and make a few hurried efforts to do something for his Creator and his country, and then hasten, as we trust, to a better place and brighter scenes. Of all the Divine providences, there are none more inscru-

table to us than the early removal of a sprightly, efficient, humble, energetic young minister of Jesus, of irreproachable character, and unusual promise to the church and the world. Is it that God is jealous of his glory, and sees that the great object of the minister's labor must be defeated? Though his merit be ever so great, his eloquence ever so towering, his zeal ever so burning, his research ever so profound, his light ever so brilliant, his philanthropy ever so pure, his love to God and man ever so ardent, his humility ever so deep, his labor ever so incessant, if the principal tendency of his exertion is to produce an exalted estimate of his own personal accomplishments, and venerable regard for his person, his piety, zeal, and every attainable human and even Christian excellency; and however he may connect with the most unostentatious and unpretending manners the most repeated and evidently sincere disclaimers of all—the slightest as well as the grossest expressions of adulation—if, in spite of all his efforts to the contrary, he becomes the unintentional and perhaps the innocent and unoffending occasion of the unsolicited regards and rebukable adoration of admiring yet fearfully deluded and mistaken friends, so that the borrowed brilliancy of the inferior and dependent

light should induce the admiration due only to the pure original fountain, then the removal would be an act of wisdom and love. As loving the creature more than the Creator is a very prolific source of human error and calamity, and as man, and especially man that ministers in holy things, is more liable to be idolized than almost any other creature, permit us to contemplate the evils resulting therefrom in several respects.

1. Its exceedingly great offensiveness to Him who cannot divide the least of His glory with the tallest seraph, much less with a poor mortal man. If the most interesting and lovely of all created intelligences, who dwell in the highest heaven, should engross the warmest love of human beings, it would certainly be an act of the greatest kindness in the God of love to remove the idol. God, who is infinitely lovely, must be loved supremely. It is almost impossible for man to see the sinfulness and misery of not loving God with a pure heart fervently and supremely, and his great liability to have his love engrossed by inferior things. Man is so much a creature of excess as to render it difficult to love at all without loving to idolatry; hence we account for the sacrilegious homage paid to the

Pope, Cardinals, Bishops, and sometimes, we fear, even in Protestant circles, to good humble ministers of the cross, who are, perhaps, not always so prompt and faithful in their rebukeful *disclaimations* as the visiting angel who so promptly forbade the adoration of the loving Evangelist.* Our natural vanity, and love of adulation, which rarely takes offense at offered eulogies, (however much vile dissimulation may be exercised in declining them,) are generally sufficient to make us quietly submissive to the praise which may be offered us; and the soothing sweetness of the draft is quite fitted to lull to quiet insensibility any restlessness which might be manifested by an awakened conscience. Is it not often true, that the most grave, venerable, and sensible fathers, from whose age, experience, and information, we might conclude were utterly incapable of such carnal comfort as adulation confers, that even these will wait for, and often sedulously seek, the grateful mellow tones of flattery and praise, and while they drink show inevitable signs of great delight? We need not wonder, then, that youth should be more injuriously affected by the same causes; and that the Lord should become grossly offended, both with him and his foolish flatterers.

* Revelations xix. 10.

2. The effects of excessive reverence paid to man, has a most infelicitous influence on his own character. That the man who drinks kindly and copiously of the cup of adulation cannot be saved, I will not assert, as all things are possible with God; but sure I am, that of all that goes to constitute vital godliness in man, there is nothing more essential than genuine humility. That very impious, self-important, and conceited men may have a very exalted opinion of themselves, their piety, their talents, attainments, services, and every thing else that constitutes dignity in man, none would question; and sure we are that few can sufficiently deplore the deep degradation of such a condition. The man becomes surfeited and inert with self, so much of it, that it becomes unwieldly. Such large and ponderous bodies move slowly, need much assistance to get them along, are exceedingly liable to wounds and injuries, to disorders and corruptions, and generally to a crushing fall, which cracks his brains or breaks his head, and leaves him a miserable if not utterly ruined wretch; and such is the injury occasioned by his fall, that many feel it, and suffer almost incalculably from it. Is it anti-human for men to be so carried away with themselves as really to feel entitled to something like

worship, and not be crazy either, but in the possession of well balanced reason, and all the faculties of a first rate intellect? Is the Pope in that condition? And yet we allow it possible, at least, that he is sincere. May not Cardinals and Archbishops feel so? And descending through all the grades of clerical standing, may we not detect a measure of the same destructive feeling? And happy would we be to find none of it in any other department of human society; but alas! we find it in the most ignoble and degraded circles of our poor, puffed, bloated, and self-important race; so that almost every one privately flatters himself that on the whole he possesses excellencies that few or none can equal. Such extravagant estimation of ourselves cannot fail to produce a relaxation of our energies, and entire disqualification for all that work in which the laborer is called to serve—the most degraded without any expectation of either pay or applause, and in which self must be abased and another exalted. Such a one must be a source of great mortification in his lonely hours of reflection, and a great burden to his conscientious admirers; to have such truly humbled would be truly a labor saving change to their puffing flatterers, who are no doubt often pressed to furnish

a sufficiency of suitable encomiums, seeing that each one but increases the appetite for another more highly seasoned; and thus the already vitiated mind becomes restless for more disgrace.

3. But, could we contemplate the unhappy bearing of this extravagant self esteem on the community with which it mingles, it surely could not fail to heal the malady in our own minds. To do so would be to notice all the ravages made on society by tyrants, despots, demagogues, and party leaders of all ages, whether it be in civil or religious departments. To gratify the whims of men in high places, inflated with self esteem, armies have been raised, mighty fleets have been put in requisition, and made to plow in warlike majesty through bloody waves of wide spread seas, thundering death and destruction in their sweeping career. To this, as the legitimate source, may be traced all the incalculable bloodshed and legalized murder indulged in by Emperors and rulers under the appellation of honorable war—gotten up generally to gratify some freak of self importance conceived by a chief magistrate, or some of his not much less consequential flatterers—alike regardless of the thousands slain in battle, without scarcely a thought in the way of preparation for great eternity, as

well as the ten thousands of widows and fatherless children left without earthly protectors or guides to assist them in buffetting the inhospitalities of this dreary, cold hearted world. To this we attribute all that incalculable evil resulting to many unoffending sufferers from the mean, unmanly, unlawful, and I think, rather cowardly than brave practice, among the self-styled gentlemen of honor, of fighting duels and such like combats, rather than have the heroism and true courage to forgive a little injury or endure a trifling insult. Perhaps the wisdom of God's enemies could not devise a more effectual method to dishonor the Most High, than to excite an excessive measure of applause for a mortal man, however amiable or meritorious he might be. God's declarative glory, and the very best interests of His universe, are so entirely dependent on created intelligences, apprehending the Almighty at all times as infinitely more worthy of their paramount love than any other being, though it might combine ten thousand times the loveliness of all the vast creation of lovely characters that ever have or ever will exist beside. Man portrayed by man may exhibit some unsubstantial show of loveliness, but behold his portrait drawn by an unerring hand, and then every na-

tive feature is deformed and odious as sin itself; and though it may interest with still inherent signs of pristine greatness, yet in these the devil far excels him; and in all there is not one thing to engage our love, but only to excite our wonder. All his loveliness is conferred most graciously by the very being he would presume to rival; and the fact of his being possessed of it reflects infinite glory on his rival, while he is utterly destitute of the least merit. Oh, how strange that intelligent beings, having and professing to believe the Bible, and to appreciate to some extent its great and glorious developments, should have their hearts engrossed with creature things. So that, in whatever aspect we contemplate it, it is evidently best, when even the best of men become idolized, to remove them; and, if we are at liberty to deliberate on the Divine purpose in this respect at all, we would attribute our beloved brother's removal to this cause.

Though his career was short, it was one of unusual brilliancy and great usefulness. Few men have spent so short a life to as good a purpose; and considering all the circumstances of birth, education, connections, and friends, and general facilities for accomplishing any thing, we regard the life of the youthful Rev. SAMUEL

AYRES NOEL as one unequalled in the annals of almost any age or country; which there is no doubt his true and entire biography would abundantly manifest—part of which, we regret, from our imperfect sources of information, must be incomplete; but we take pleasure in presenting it as completely and correctly as we can, it being a piece of human biography which constitutes a happy medium through which to communicate truth and principle, not only in convenient detail, but in life, and form, and active operation; teaching important morals while it entertains with humble annals, and in this way enlists in our aid, in making pious impressions, all that partiality for narrative and story which most people possess.

Brother S. A. Noel was born in Lincoln county, Kentucky, 29th December, 1814. He was the son of Rev. Joel Noel, a Baptist minister of very fine moral character, of pious, noble bearing in society, of moderate education, of strong natural powers of mind—well read only in the holy Scripture, which we are informed he used to say ought to be the principal text book in all the schools and all the world—of remarkably affectionate, open and familiar habits, entirely remote from the formal and reserved manner

thought by some necessary to preserve clerical dignity, and secure the respect of the vulgar. His manner in the pulpit was ardently zealous, and he seems to have been owned as one of the humble honored instruments in sowing the seed in the earlier settling of Kentucky which has matured into many of the venerable Baptist churches planted through that fertile region; and though a most unpretending man, who never wrote a book, and perhaps never a sermon, for his manner was entirely extempore, yet he speaks to this day, in the lives and conversation of some who remember him as the instrument of their awakening, though the grave clods have covered his body for near thirty years. Here is one of the standing proofs that the ways of the Lord are not like man's ways. Some would say that only men who are classically learned should preach the gospel; but here we find God has been pleased, as perhaps he does in most instances, to take, if not the weak things, at least things not so highly accomplished in worldly lore, to perform his great and mighty work, to be his servants in confounding the mighty and converting the wicked.

Joel Noel had the misfortune to lose the wife of his youth, who left him several children to

raise. Some one or two years after he married Miss Tabitha Dicken, a pious and devoted christian of the same denomination with himself. By his last wife he had three children. Samuel was the youngest, and before he was one year old his father died, leaving the mother in but moderate circumstances with a house full of children and step children. She lived about six years afterwards, when she died, leaving two of her own and several step children to have their chances in an inhospitable world the best way they could. They had a meager pittance of means for support and education left them, and no nearly connected wealthy kindred to extend to them the helping hand. Samuel had but slender opportunities at common country schools, and consequently his early education was very superficial. His guardian was only in moderate circumstances, with a large family, and had nothing to spare from their education to appropriate to others.

Samuel became quite thoughtless and wicked at about eleven years old, but was often the subject of very pungent conviction for sin. He often grieved immoderately at the recollection of his bereaved and friendless condition, and the recollection of the admonitions and prayers of his pious mother, the impressions made by whom

in her last moments seem never to have been forgotten, and proved ultimately the means of his being brought savingly to a knowledge of the truth, in which is forcibly shown the power of a parent's last exertions for beloved children. In the following piece from his own pen, shortly after he professed religion, is shown the force of parental solicitude for their children. He says,

“When I was one year old, my father died, he was a minister of the gospel, of the regular Baptist order, a man of good reputable character for piety and usefulness in his own church and neighborhood. He departed this life with a strong and lively hope of a blessed immortality at God's right hand. These things my mother and the neighbors used to tell me when I was a naughty little boy.

“At the age of seven, I had the misfortune to lose my dear mother also, leaving two little orphans—now sister Mary W. Smith, and myself—to buffet the waves of misfortune, and share the cold charities of the world, without father or mother.

“I shall never forget my dear mother. Her last words, under God, were, at an early age, the means of the conversion of my soul. The neighbors had gathered in to see her die: she related

her experience, appeared very joyful in view of her immediate passage to heaven, and praised the Lord for all his goodness to her soul. She then asked for her children, we came near her bed side, she said to us: 'Remember your father's example; he is in heaven; soon I shall join him, and you, my dear children, will have no father or mother. I leave you in the hands of the Lord, every necessary comfort will be supplied you by your guardian. Will you be good and dutiful children and meet your parents in heaven? and we both promised. Then taking hold of my hand (I almost feel the touch of my dear mother's hand this moment) she said, O my dear little son, remember your father was a good man and follow his example, I have prayed to the Lord that he would convert your soul, and that you might be called to warn sinners of their danger. You will be an orphan: I fear the bad examples you will meet with in the world may ruin your precious soul. Meet me in heaven. Farewell.

"I felt the grasp of my mother's hand relax its hold; I looked at her, but she had expired. No one, who has never experienced it, can realize the orphan's feelings. No sooner had I discovered that my mother was dead, than a feeling of desolation came over me, and though but a

poor little boy, a deep sense of my situation flashed across my mind. I wept bitterly, but had no one to go to in my distress. My dear parents were dead, and the Lord was the only one for me to look to now; but I felt that I was a sinner, and how could I approach him? Here was the first time I remember to have been convicted of my sins. I thought I would be a good boy, and meet my mother in heaven; but wild associates, and a lively disposition soon wore off my serious feelings, and I became as light and as bad a boy as could be seen in the school room. When about eleven years old, the Cumberland Presbyterians first came into the upper portion of Kentucky. They preached at our school house; it was a new thing, and large congregations came out to hear them. One day one of these men of God said he would relate an anecdote, addressing himself to us children. He said there had been preaching at a certain school house; the subject was prayer, and the minister told the children they ought to pray—the Lord would hear them, they would soon love to pray, for the Lord would bless them, and they would be happy. His urgent advice to them was, that they should try it for themselves—should go to some secret place, where none but God could see

and hear, and make a trial. Well, said the preacher, one little boy followed the good man's advice; he went to his father's stack yard, and commenced the habit of prayer; and the Lord heard him, and made him a happy little Christian. He continued to pray. The servant saw him one day engaged in prayer, and told his father. His father was an infidel, and reprimanded his little son severely for praying; and told him if he prayed any more, he would drive him off—he would have no praying on his plantation, or about his house. His little son was in great distress, but he replied, father, I love you and mother, and my sisters and brothers, but it is true I love my Saviour more, and if I am counted worthy of him, I must forsake all for Christ's sake. The father, seeing the constancy, and manly bearing of his little son, determined on milder means to dissuade him from praying, and said, you must certainly have learned to pray pretty well: the servants tell me you have been in the habit of praying at the stack yard some time; let me hear you pray. The little Christian said, if you, and mother, and brothers, and sisters will kneel down with me, I will. Out of curiosity, on their part, and to intimidate, on the father's part, all knelt down, when lifting up his lit-

the hands before the mercy seat, and his heart to God, the words were, "O Lord, have mercy on my father, and mother, and all my sisters and brothers," &c. Blessed be God, said the preacher, before he was done, his parents were weeping, and the very next day all his sisters and brothers went with him to the stack yard to pray.

"So soon as I heard this anecdote related, an arrow pierced my heart; methought, here is a little boy persecuted for serving God, and that by his father; but I had a praying father and mother, both now in heaven, would they not be pleased to see me go to the stack yard and pray? But I have never prayed at all. O how I was distressed: I remembered my mother's advice, when she used to tell me, as I sat on her lap, about my father, and how I must do. Tears would fall from her eyes upon my face, and she would kneel down and pray for me. I remembered her last words—"meet me in heaven." I hid my face and wept, and resolved to follow the little boy's example. That evening I went to the grove alone, and knelt down upon the ground and tried to pray. When I arose, the sun was down, and night was close at hand. I said to myself, I have no father or mother; I am a great sinner before God, O what will become

of me, and I wept bitterly. For twelve months I kept this thing to myself; I was ashamed to tell any one how I felt. I made it a point every day to pray in secret; I went to hear preaching every opportunity, but only saw more and more the wickedness of my heart and life. One day I had been some distance from home, and while returning, I despaired of mercy, and concluded I should go to hell; but this thought came into my mind, mother has told me Jesus Christ died for sinners, can't I believe it? She has prayed for me when I was quite a small child, and as she was a good Christian, the Lord may yet answer her prayers for me; I will pray once more, and if I must die and be lost, I will pray for mercy as I sink into the flames of hell. I stopped in the road, by the side of a mud hole, and begged God, for Christ's sake, to have mercy on my soul; and glory to God, light broke into my mind. I saw the plan, and felt the peace of pardon all at once. The first words I uttered were, as glory to God. I sprang across the mud, and ran fast as I could towards home, praising God every step. This thing could not be kept a secret now; I told every person I met what the Lord had done for my soul. The first person I wanted to see was the good man who told the anecdote in

his sermon. I thought of my parents, and rejoiced in the hope of soon meeting them in heaven. Some said I was going crazy; but blessed be God, I am still able to tell what the Lord has done for my soul."

Other sources of information tell us, that after obtaining his assurance of pardon and peace with God, as he expresses it, he ran with great haste to the school house, (where the preacher alluded to was then teaching,) shouting and praising God aloud as he went. It was late in the evening and the school was dismissed. He met some children, told them what he had found, and exhorted them hastily to seek the Lord. When he reached the school house the teacher was out of sight and the children dispersing, but he hastily told them what great things the Lord had done for his soul. Many of them were cut to the heart and excited to commence seeking religion. He left them to pursue the preacher, whom he soon found. He related his feelings to the preacher, and tried to tell to the family where they were, what a precious thing religion was, and that he now enjoyed what he had so often heard his dear parents talk about. From thence he went home to his uncle's, by the way of another neighborhood, rejoicing and telling

the good news of his deliverance from his heavy burden of condemnation and guilt to all he met. And then with his uncle and aunt Smith and his numerous cousins, they had a most precious time of conviction and congratulation, such as will perhaps only terminate in the fruition of the heavenly state. So for many months he went on his way rejoicing, talking and telling about Jesus and his great salvation wherever he went. He was very devoted to the Scriptures, and unusually apt in his apprehension of their meaning. In a short time he attached himself to the Cumberland Presbyterian church, at the stone school house on Harrod's Run, near Danville, where he soon became a very cheerful and efficient assistant of the brethren in all the religious exercises of the church. He was very able in prayer, and whenever solicited to do so, would open prayer meetings by reading a chapter and offering a few accompanying remarks, always greatly to the satisfaction of the audience.

His uncle, who was a regular Baptist, about this time became quite enlisted with the people called Reformers, and seemed very desirous to have all his friends embrace the same views. This gave rise to some religious differences in

the family ; as others of brother Smith's family had also joined the Cumberland Presbyterian church, and did not desire to leave it, and have remained steadfast in their adherence ever since. This, however, was a source of very severe trial to little Sammy, as he very soon became quite confirmed in the belief, that the Reformers were in great error, in teaching that no one could have assurance (upon the authority of the Bible) of the forgiveness of their sins without being baptized by immersion with a view to obtain pardon of sin therein ; and that God had not intimated in his word any disposition to extend pardon to sinners in any other way, let them exercise ever so much repentance, faith, humility, prayer, or any other duty, and that immersion was the only instituted means of forgiveness, without which, in our day, we could have no ground to expect it. At the same time he felt great unwillingness to do any thing, even in his religious course, that would be disagreeable to his affectionate relatives. Just about this crisis, too, he began to feel it more powerfully impressed upon his mind, to try and make what preparation kind Providence might put into his reach to fit him for the awful and responsible duties of the holy ministry. His impressions

for some months had been a source of most heart-rending anxiety. He could not conscientiously subscribe and teach any other construction of the holy Scriptures than those, or substantially those given by the Cumberland Presbyterians. How to get along with this people he could not well see. Institutions affording much aid to young men in his condition had not yet been put in operation among them. Inducements were held out to him from other quarters of our visible Zion, the doctrines of which had they been compatible with his views of the Bible's meaning, would have afforded him great relief; but from the very start, he looked upon a sound theology, as not much less important than sound principles and practice, both with a private Christian as well as a minister. Hence, as he often said in after times, it would have been criminally faithless to have changed his theological ground; for one he could but regard as less perfect and correct; whatever inducements might be held out to invite the change, it would, in his judgment, have been wholly unjustifiable, if not absolutely reckless of proper religious regard for truth and Christian principle. He resolved that his sincere allegiance to the best available form of doctrine, approaching nearest in sentiment to his ap-

prehensions of the sacred text, should be a fundamental consideration in all his movements. He loved his church and its doctrines and usages with a very sincere and enlightened affection, and the more so, the longer he was exercised in them, taught them, and compared them with others. While there were few spirits more truly catholic than his, and few subjects he dwelt on with more delight or ability than religious toleration, free and extended; yet there was nothing more prominent in his character than firm and uncompromising adherence to what he believed fundamental and important.

While his difficulties remained, he seemed not to relax his zeal in the precious cause; his energy and fervor in prayer rather increased. His guardian, perhaps, not thinking it desirable that he should try to be a preacher with the Cumberland Presbyterians, gave him no encouragement; and thinking it important that he learn a trade, he bound him to Mr. O. Garnett—fortunately, a man of unusual cleverness—to learn the tailoring business, in which he obediently engaged without a murmur. Mr. G. was a Presbyterian, and quite disposed to encourage piety and worth in any denomination, and has always extended his hospitalities to the Cumberland Presbyterians

with great cheerfulness. In him brother Noel found rather a Christian friend and brother, than a hard task master. While at Danville, he enjoyed the unrestrained privilege of attending upon the means of grace which were numerously afforded; and through the religious courtesy of the brethren of the place, he was invited to bear his humble part in the social lay exercises of the different churches, which he did, quite to the satisfaction of all. Here, from his having the opportunity of enjoying more communion with enlightened piety, his impression to the work of the ministry became the absorbing subject of his thoughts; and young and unprepared as he felt himself, and as indeed he really was, he nevertheless felt, "Woe unto me if I preach not the gospel." But how to accomplish it he could not see.

He suffered along several months, until his friends began to conclude that his impressions to preach had all subsided, and outward things seemed to be directing him another way; but still he had no rest until he consented to cast himself on the Lord and try, let prospects be ever so forbidding and gloomy. Accordingly, he made known his determination to a friend, who conferred with Mr. Garnett, who was ready to

do in the case just what a gentleman ought to do.

Brother Noel had now arrived at that age when it was his privilege to choose his guardian, which he did, with great modesty, not wishing to inflict the least wound on the feelings of his uncle, but merely to put himself under the care of one who would favor his impressions to preach the blessed gospel, which he thought had done so much for him, and was so well calculated to do as much and more for unnumbered thousands more, if it was only urged and pressed upon their attention, as it might and ought to be.

He found a guardian in some respects suitable; one who would at least appreciate his feelings, and favor his views to the work of the holy ministry, but unable to do much more for him than barely to wish him success. He was shortly excused from his apprenticeship. After spending a few months at school, he put himself under the care of Kentucky Presbytery, in October, 1830, having found an humble home in the family of his new guardian, where he found some very restricted opportunities of making small additions to his superficial and limited education.

Few men have ever been more devoted, and made more of their facilities than brother Noel. It seemed always to be an article in his creed that

indolence was very disgraceful; and that every one was sacredly bound not only to do the most, but be the most he could. He was apt to learn, and very assiduous in his efforts. He often regretted his want of opportunity to acquire a thorough education, and was entirely unwilling to be licensed or ordained as a minister until he could at least undergo a thorough examination on all the branches of literature required by our discipline—which standard he admired as just the very thing for a general rule—under which, none should be set apart to the sacred work, and all be advised and encouraged to go beyond it. The subject of ministerial education was one in which he took a deep interest; and he often expressed a great solicitude that the church should give more general attention to it. He believed, and often expressed it, that this was to be the secret of the Cumberland Presbyterians' success. That our doctrines constituted an improvement worthy of the most favorable notice in the annals of Presbyterian theology, he was very clear and confident, so much so, as to be regarded by some as almost rigid. Among all the branches of the church, Presbyterian government, with the belief that God in the great plan of salvation, was equally benevolent and free, in his glorious de-

signs of mercy and salvation, to one man as much as another; and that the free offer of his grace and Spirit—without which, none could accept—were tendered alike to all; and that, instead of decreeing “whatever comes to pass,” God decrees what shall be for his own glory; sin not being for his glory, he has not decreed.

His progress in science and theology was very good, and his services as an exhorter and conductors of social meetings, were highly appreciated by the churches during the whole time of his hasty preparation. Almost from the very start he was listened to with nearly as much interest as would be taken in the teaching of an aged minister. He was peculiarly happy in referring to his youth and early orphanage, so as to bring it into more account in recommending and enforcing his message than he could have done the most grave and whitened locks; indeed, from the very time of his conversion, he was almost constantly engaged in preaching Jesus in some way or other; even while among his fellow-servants, his absorbing theme was religion; and whenever it was practicable, without appearing forward or ostentatious, he was prompt to exert his influence in his Master's cause. Strange, that with scarcely any advantage from parent-

al instruction, he should have been so early imbued with discrimination and prudence. May we not attribute it to the special care of a generous Providence, whose fatherly care is promised to the fatherless? If God takes care of the oxen, may we not the more confidently expect that he will take care of the children of his believing people, who have not only consecrated their little ones in the ordinance of God's house, but in their dying moments, laying their hands upon them, giving them up to God and imploring the Divine protection over them? How foolish to suppose, that friendships secured by living parents, or estates safely vested by them in any of the stocks of this world, can be relied on with confidence as indemnities against the earliest encroachments upon the rights, or the wants of their children after them. And here permit me to remark, how much better it would be for the peace and comfort of the parent, and how much better for his cause whose we are, and who has a right to all our means, and how much safer and better for our children, to invest all their patrimony in the Lord's hands, who only may be relied upon to keep it securely for them until the day of need. Cannot parents do much to enlist the promises of God's precious and sure

word in favor of their children? Could any thing better be done for our children than for the Lord to be their God? Many a child has been left in the warmest yet blindest confidence, to the guardianship of an earthly friend, whose promises for protection were full and fair, and perhaps made in the greatest sincerity and with the sincerest purpose of full compliance; yet so unstable and peccable is poor human nature, and so little to be relied on are his strongest resolutions, that no sooner than the will is recorded, and the assets are being appraised, than principles of vile selfishness so press upon the integrity as to cause it to give way, and with it the confidence reposed by a dying parent in favor of his helpless and dependent babes is all blasted; and now, instead of being a father to the orphan, with an appetite as voracious as an unfeeling oppressor, he commences to exhaust the very life he stands pledged to succor and uphold; hence comes wretchedness and want, ignorance and degradation, where, under other auspices, might have been virtue, intelligence and comfort. How many thousands and millions of poor orphans, like little Sammy, (as he was familiarly called by his juvenile associates,) have been fostered and fed, and reared up to respectability and use-

fulness, by him whose promises are unto us and to our children after us, and who has so graciously promised to be a father to the fatherless; and yet we will be so criminally heedless about trying to enlist His care over our children, and placing what we may be enabled to gather for their education and support in His sure hands, where we may be so confidently assured, that it will not only be safely kept, but will be wisely applied with all its increase, (which shall be at a large per cent,) to the very use to which it has been religiously assigned. And moreover, notwithstanding in other hands, the interests, the character, and every thing that pertains to the poor unprotected orphan, has been so badly managed and so recklessly squandered, yet poor blinded men will rely more on deceptive mortals than on their Maker. How often has the Lord said to us in substance, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shall find it after many days." "Honor the Lord with thy substance and with the first fruits of all thine increase, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty and thy presses burst out with new wine."

There is, perhaps, no duty more frequently enjoined in the holy Bible with larger promises, both to us and to our children, than the

duty of giving; and still there is perhaps no class of duties so much neglected; while much less important duties engross almost our whole attention, this one, because it so conflicts with the most darling sin of selfishness, is left for the most part entirely unpracticed, to provide for self, to indulge, to pamper and to gratify, instead of to deny, mortify and crucify self, seems to be almost the chief concern of most poor mortals—reversing, as near as can be, the order of God, in this respect; and sin has so infatuated our nature, as but too well to reconcile us to this unhappy reversion. Is it not high time that the friends of benevolence not only recommend, extol, eulogize, and pray for the extent of, but begin in good earnest to practice it, lest the unhappy prevalence of selfishness entirely supplant it.

Is it not to be feared that too many regard vital religion as consisting more in mere feelings, theories, and circumspect deportment, together with doing well for ourselves and families, rather than devoting ourselves to others' good, and consecrating our lives to the business of benevolence, and the great work of converting the world to the standard of the cross of Jesus Christ. The feeling of self-consecration, by which a young

man of sprightliness and promise is prompted to dedicate himself to a work, most laborious in its duties, both for body and mind, in which he makes no calculation for distinction, or ease, or pleasure, for himself, is worthy the highest emulation of the philanthropist or the hero; in whose course the daring spirit who ventures to be announced as the vindicator, the friend and advocate of the claims of an injured King, whose subjects had rebelled, and with one consent continued for centuries to repeat in the most aggravated forms their perpetuated and still more confirmed feelings of irreconciliation, must calculate on periling all that the world or the flesh counts dear; becoming dead to mirth, hilarity, and all those carnal earthly indulgences which engross and so much fascinate the worldly mind; and in his anticipations rise above the visionary fancies of worldly bliss, and learn to view with dauntless purpose ills and calamities of the most formidable character, not to be avoided or shrunk from, but to be met—met, not to be ingloriously vanquished by them, because it may cost labor, anxiety, and sacrifice of interest and honor to overcome, but met to be subdued and conquered; knowing too that the sole ground of success must be in aid derived from an offended Sovereign,

upon whose bounty he has no claims at all, and in the event of whose success he reaps no laurels to himself, but is to find all his pleasure in ascribing all the glory to God.

Such were the characteristic feelings and aims of the bold and beloved subject of our memoir; as he frequently expressed himself, and as the tenor of his life goes clearly to confirm, if his honest convictions of propriety should lead him to apprehend as proper, a course of conduct differing widely from those in whose opinions he entertained the highest respect and confidence, nothing more could be done under any circumstances than to induce him to observe a course of dignified neutrality.

He was a person of unusually tender sensibilities, either in eulogy or reproach; he was never known to invite the former, but always to decline it with a manly timidity; the latter, when he could be satisfied it was unmerited, he was rather too apt to recompense with severe expressions of dislike. He would remember long and with deep gratitude favors done him, and seemed to take unusual delight in the forgiveness of an insult or injury on the very slightest intimations of acknowledgement. He possessed a large share of natural amiableness of disposition, which, being

tempered by religion, rendered him exceedingly interesting in the social relations, and eminently qualified him for mixing favorably with society, wherever he might be called; and though he soon became capable of rendering himself both interesting and profitable in the more improved and fashionable circles, yet his inclination led him to prefer the circles of the pious and good, however humbled their condition might be.

His natural sprightliness, with his piety and interesting qualities, induced a wish on the part of his friends that he should be licensed to preach even at an earlier period than he was, but he was very reluctant to assume the weighty responsibilities of a preacher of the gospel; he would often suggest to his more intimate friends, that the work looked too great for him to engage in; he seemed always afraid that by some want of capacity for it, or some indiscretion, he might retard rather than advance the work, which would be to him a source of most excruciating shame and distress; however, he submitted to be licensed on the 30th of September, 1831, and consented to try and comply with the wishes of his Presbytery by taking an appointment to travel and preach through a district of country where our church and its doctrines were but little

known, except in a few small societies, with whom he was well received, and to the people generally he soon became very acceptable. Few men, of his age and opportunities, have labored more efficiently and successfully; many, through his instrumentality, while he was yet in his teens, were induced to seek religion, and have given proof by their walk and conversation that they did not seek in vain.

Though he preached boldly the doctrines of his church among older and more experienced ministers, and would not fail to contend for the preference due to the medium theological position he professed to occupy, and to show with perspicuity and force that the Calvinists on the one hand, and the Arminians on the other, must both be on extremes, or if either was right, the other must be exceedingly erroneous, and he was not willing to believe that either, all things considered, had very much the advantage of the other; he held and loved both parties as eminently pious and useful people, but always felt that the midway ground between them was the most true and most safe ground, and that it was much the most tenable against the attacks of infidelity, and much the most eligible to get good and do good in the common cause.

While, with a most fervent zeal and clearness of argument, he would attempt to show the dangers on the one side or the other, such were the manifestations of respect and kindness for those who differed with him, that all liberal minds of all religions loved and admired the man and his manners; though they would not yield to his arguments, they would admire his spirit, and be profited by his labors.

That religious differences may be, and ought to be, discussed in a peculiarly charitable and kind spirit, we have no question; and done in this way, may we not reasonably conclude that truth will be the gainer by it? And that Christians will be induced to greater charity, forbearance, and toleration, there is but little doubt. But to discuss them with that spirit of bigotry, illiberality, and vituperation, in which it is sometimes done, there can be no doubt is very wicked in itself, and must tend greatly to the prejudice of vital godliness. Because of difficulties connected with this subject, and because it requires much patience, firmness, prayer, and dependence on God to do it right, and because some brethren are so petulant as not to be qualified to do this service in a zealous, yet meek and affectionate spirit, they conclude to let every thing alone in

which any person may differ with them, and deal altogether in what no body disputes, and often things that even the devil himself cares but little about men's believing or not, and then claim the credit of being more pious than others, because they say nothing about any other people's doctrines. Some people get so overmuch righteous as to conclude that it is wrong to preach doctrinal sermons; just as though it were not equally as important, or rather more so, to have correct sentiments as correct practices even. As sentiments, or doctrines, if you prefer it, are and must be the foundation of the whole superstructure of religion in man, both in principle and practice, which is most creditable to a faithful ambassador of Christ, for the sake of quietude to let error remain in Zion, or to labor and study to correct it, though he may thereby incur the censure of many, and even the reproach of the fastidious? Truth, in the seeming estimation of many, has so completely "fallen in the streets," and the knowledge and belief of it thought to constitute so unimportant a part of religion, that to be the least particular in discriminating between truth and error, is reckoned nothing but the vile affectation of a bigot; and to use the pulpit in the propagation of sentiments not gen-

erally embraced—however clearly taught in the Bible, and conscientiously believed to be highly important by the propagator—is pronounced by those who differ as very unbecoming a minister of Jesus; and many will join to reproach him as a disturber of the peace of Zion—as every body knows that wantonly to interrupt the peace of the church is truly a great sin—and thus calumny is often heaped on the man who dares fearlessly, yet ever so respectfully, fairly, and courteously, to oppose prevailing error, and contend for the belief and love of truth as the only means of sanctification. May we not ask such cavilers what the Saviour means in Mat. x. 34, where he says, “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword: for I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: and a man’s foes shall be they of his own household.”

It is certain we are not to understand these words in a social or civil sense, for in that sense Jesus has come not only to contribute to, but to be the Author and Prince of a perfect and everlasting peace, in which even the lion and the lamb shall lie down together; and there shall be

nothing to annoy in all his vast dominion. It is equally certain, however difficult it may be to ascertain the precise import of the passage, that it must be of vast importance to every one correctly to know and appreciate it. We have no question but the war is such a one as the advocates of truth and righteousness wage against error and sin, and the weapons drawn no more bloody or deadly than the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, quick and powerful: to be sure in a spiritual sense, to kill and also to make alive. The variance, we conclude to be only such as may be not unreasonably presumed to grow out of the independent exercise of the unalienable rights of the rising generation to think for themselves, and scrutinize and criticise the sciences, the politics, the literature, and religion of their fathers, and dare to differ with them.

Here is often tested the religious accuracy of our feelings, when we are called to say whether we will follow God or man, whether the intelligent convictions of our own understandings and consciences, the result of the Holy Spirit's illuminations and influences upon us, shall direct our religious movement, or whether these are to be rejected for the footsteps and traditions of our

fathers. Is it not greatly to be feared, that many who are in various ways crowded into the different churches of the nineteenth century, are very remiss in neglecting to acquaint themselves with the theology of the times, and often commit and pledge themselves to the support of what they do not understand, and what they are sometimes most miserably taught that it does not concern them to know.

In some communities, where the number of accessions made is rather regarded as almost the entire data by which to estimate the ability and character of a minister's services, temptations are furnished to receive many into the church, with scarcely a shadow of evidence of real piety, and barely the form of an examination on the subject. Thus many become committed to, and have all their prejudices enlisted in favor of forms of Christian doctrine, before they ever become acquainted with them; and if they should chance—and it is the merest chance—to be brought to see their error, we all know how few there are who have the Christian firmness to renounce it as they should. Our serious fears are, that when persons change their religion, where one is influenced mainly by respect for the truth, ten are governed by considerations of entirely

an inferior kind. To follow even the purest faith from mere prejudice, would only be doing right with a wrong intention, which would be nothing to our credit, and likely not much more to our advantage; but to follow an unsound faith from mere prejudice or carelessness, rejecting a more true and correct form, and to persist in such a course, would be certain to land us in the ditch of eternal disgrace and ruin. For parents to acknowledge an infinite progress in religion, and then contend that there can be no clearer conceptions of its doctrines than they or their fathers had, to me seems very inconsistent; so does their petulant impatience with the Popish doctrine of infallibility, and their severity and rigorous intolerance with their children or relations who venture to differ with them, and strike a religious course never trodden by their fathers' feet. Mothers-in-law sometimes have been at serious variance with daughters-in-law, fathers with sons, and some of the dearest members of households, on account of conscientious difference in their apprehensions of God's precious word, and have indulged in even disgraceful variances, so as often to find our most formidable and unrelenting foes to be of our own household or kindred.

While all sensible and prudent Christians would advise careful examination, and great caution about following every wandering star or wind of doctrine, and yet an independent, full, fair, and fearless examination of all the tenets we subscribe or acquiesce in, and not servilely submit without investigation to the dictations of dominant bigotry, or sometimes to the not much less rigorous terms of more insinuating proud orthodoxy—many parents, who profess much toleration, carefully discourage, if not absolutely forbid, their children or friends from reading or hearing any thing which is not in strict keeping with their sectarian views.

It seems to me that the practice of aping and following friends (even the most devotedly pious ones) and undigested forms, instead of Christ Jesus and his holy word—who are infinitely superior to the clearest lights or fairest rules ever conceived in earth—has been a more prolific cause, not only of leanness and barrenness among Christians, but of rivalries and other distresses, than all other causes; and perhaps nothing has been a greater clog to the Christian's progress. Is not his attention almost necessarily directed backward to the sickly, irregular pictures of his poor pattern, drawn, perhaps, at first by a sordid

hireling eulogist, a thousand times more to please the flesh than the spirit, instead of being directed onward and upward to the higher and holier breathings, excited by a believing, steady contemplation of Christ and his cross, and the opening beauties and preciousness of his word of truth.

Better, far better that the noble deeds of pious men had never been chronicled, but left to be devoured by unrelenting oblivion, without a whisper or a breeze to herald them; better that the heights of fame had never been attained, and that the noblest achievements had never been won; better that all the well earned distinctions gained by patriots and heroes, by holy martyrs and flaming missionaries, with the still more imperishable laurels of humble worthies, should all have perished, and, instead of being heralded in every journal, be stamped with eternal infamy, rather than have them mentioned, and continually referred to, as a kind of super-human performances, which it would be a kind of daring impudence, if not downright profanity, for men of the present or any future generation to attempt to emulate; fixing the almost immovable impression, that the days of heroic achievements and patriotic deeds have all fled away, and that

now-a-days, to think of imitating Moses or Elijah, Paul or Peter, Luther or Zwingli, would be regarded, not only by the wisdom of the world, but by the dignitaries of the church, as not only impracticable, but utterly needless and visionary.

Often men, by following the flickering light of an earthly torch, become more effectually lost than darkness itself could lose them; but by keeping their eyes steadily fixed on the great luminary above, it matters not what zone or hemisphere they tenant, the heavenly rays will strike on their pathway to guide them to the skies.

On the subject of mental independence, and just and manly contempt of mere human authority and influence, when it appeared to him incompatible with the Divine will, perhaps no man of his age was more happily balanced than Brother Noel; while he was entirely unobtrusive, and free from all self-importance, (considering the compliments paid him by all classes,) he was decisive, prompt, firm, and energetic. Where he was unduly attacked, or called to defend an important position or principle, in his very boyhood he manifested much of the sagacity, skill, and resolution of manhood.

His kindred were all educated with strong Baptist predilections—his father having served as a

minister in that church for many years—yet seeing, as he thought, a more desirable position on the medium ground taken by the Cumberland Presbyterians, he asked to be associated there, and asked the privilege of being baptized by immersion, which he repeatedly avowed, in after life, was only the prejudice of education, and gave it as his decided opinion that that prejudice, in all probability, would have first ruled him into the Baptist church, and then, to a great extent, controled the labors of his after life; though he was truly grateful that he escaped the confirmation of his prejudices, and consequent irrecoverable commitment of his almost entire life and energies to so inconsiderable a point in theology, as he often expressed himself, in substance. For the several last years of his life, he was a decided pedobaptist, and, as he often said, became so the first time he had an opportunity of examining the subject thoroughly, and entirely free from the bearings of sectarian prepossessions and partialities, which he thought he never could have been, had he either been baptized by sprinkling or immersed by the Baptist brethren.

It is rather remarkable that a large majority of those who have early predilections for immersion, if they are thus baptized by a minister,

and live with a people who are not sticklers about the mode, but believe and teach that baptism is equally valid, if administered to a proper subject, by a proper minister, in the proper name, with the proper element, and done in reference to the proper institution: so that each one, whether baptized by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion, will equally feel that he has been baptized, taken upon him the baptismal vows, and done what the Saviour enjoined, when he directed them to be baptized; and each one feels the same comforts and discouragements, and to be brought under the same obligations, and to be entitled to the same privileges, on account of his baptism; and all feel mutually ashamed, and full of confessions and apologies to one another, for having indulged in so much very unprofitable debate and bitterness about so inconsiderable a matter. I say it is remarkable that almost all such become sentimentally and thoroughly pedobaptists.

I will name one case, among many which I might refer to, under my own observation; the persons are alive, and will likely read this. Mr. J. Ewing, then of Mercer county, who married a niece of Rev. Dr. Clelland, who was much beloved as a Presbyterian minister by all his relations; but Mrs. Ewing, in early life, had strong

immersion preferences—a little woman, of fine sense, piety, and Bible reading—she embraced religion, and (the old Doctor's influence notwithstanding) she must go down into the water and be immersed, and join the Baptists. In a short time afterwards the Cumberland Presbyterians appeared in their neighborhood, when Mr. Ewing and his wife both became pleased with their doctrines and usages; he soon became much concerned about his personal salvation, and professed religion after a few months, and joined the church, (his wife having done so a short time before.) He was quite decided in his convictions that nothing but immersion would do him for baptism; when, without any contention, it was quietly administered to him in that way, and he went on his way rejoicing, and promptly commenced the duties of religion, praying and reading the Scriptures in his family. In a few months, coming to church on Sabbath with his three little children, without having ever attended any debate, or consulting extensively any authors but the Bible, and having said but very little, even to his minister, on the subject, he steps to the door of the pulpit and says: "Brother ———, Betsey (that is his wife) wishes to have our children baptized;" accordingly, the whole

family were forthwith consecrated to God, and seemed to grow in grace, and get more and more happy in God every day, and bearing testimony to all, that good people ought not so seriously to differ about outward things, which have directly but very little to do with forming their moral characters.

Brother Noel, in all his labors, while he was firm in the vindication of an important truth, was always remarkably conciliatory in things he regarded as not absolutely essential to salvation; though he would reason with his brethren, who he conceived to be in error, his spirit and manner were so fair and reasonable, that in his warmest controversial discourses, none but the illiberal or bigoted would take any umbrage at him.

In his preaching, generally, he labored to have something to say which would both edify and profit the hearers; and merely to attend to the form of a service, without a personal satisfaction of having been enabled to present something which would profit his hearers, would render him exceedingly unhappy. His sermons were evidently studied and prepared with much previous thought and arrangement, though he wrote but very little; and it was always a mystery to his most intimate acquaintances, how he prepar-

ed as many sermons as he did in so little time, and with the small resources he enjoyed—his youth, his limited education, his very circumscribed circle for observation, the scantiness of his means to procure a library, the multiplicity of his cares, growing out of his early poverty, together with his being called to labor for a people who had not been much in the habit of supporting their ministers. He had to labor for a very scanty allowance, and devote a part of his time to the labors of husbandry for a support, which he did with great cheerfulness, though he often regretted that he could not be released from those cares, that he might give himself wholly to prayer, and to the ministry of the word, and the ordinances of the house of God. He often expressed his desire to be more thoroughly given up to the work of the ministry. With a modest expression of the belief, that the Lord would own his labors, to make him more extensively useful, he waited to enter at the first opening door.

Brother Noel was ordained by Kentucky Presbytery on the 6th day of October, 1834, to the whole work of the Christian ministry, having preached as a probationer, and served the Presbytery as a missionary, quite to the edifica-

tion and profit of those to whom he ministered, for about three years, during which time he labored zealously night and day, through heat and cold, wet and dry, often with very scanty and uncomfortable equipage, and through a country where there were but few, and they very feeble, societies of Cumberland Presbyterians, consequently unable to afford him but a pittance in the way of support. Yet he believed that the brethren did for him what was conveniently in their power, and that they did it from motives of conscience and scrupulous preference for what they regard as the truth, and an ardent desire to sustain it. The discouragements under which they labored were increased more than all, by the unfortunate indisposition of the denomination, in the bounds of their operations, not only to withhold their hearty co-operation, but in some instances to repel or retard their efforts.

The boundaries included many of the residences and fields of labor of several of the members of the commission of Kentucky Synod, who at first dissolved Cumberland Presbytery for ordaining ministers without a knowledge of Greek and Latin, and for allowing them, in the adoption of the Confession of Faith, to except the idea of fatality, which the candidates for ordina-

tion conceived to be couched there. Their former dissatisfaction with the Presbytery it is not to be supposed would have entirely subsided; or after the independent organization of the Presbytery, that it should abate very much. This opposition to Cumberland Presbyterian organization is no more than might be reasonably expected from the imperfections of our nature, even in a very considerable state of improvement.

Here permit us, as an apology to the inconsiderate, for the tardy progress of our doctrines and principles—which is too apt to be attributed to a want of merit—to show that the success of the Cumberland Presbyterians is not only a more valuable work than most suppose it to be; and that its success, all things considered, has been almost unparalleled in the annals of the Church of Christ. The Cumberland Presbyterians did not constitute a division of the Church; such as the New or Old School Presbyterians, where there was a division of a body which had been growing for ages, under the most favorable auspices; or such as the Reformers and the Baptists; in both of which cases, there was a separation of large bodies, out of either of which might have been constituted five hundred associations as large, as respects numbers, means, &c., as the

first Cumberland Presbytery. The same may be said of the Protestant Methodist Church, and of the Methodist Episcopal Church North, and the Methodist Episcopal Church South, all of which were strong in ministers, members, churches, colleges, money, and means, with able writers, defenders, evangelists, &c. at the very start. Suppose we illustrate it by the comparison of two brothers, commencing the world with a view to acquire wealth and distinction; one commences with a splendid patrimony, a rich and extensive farm, in a high state of cultivation, stocked in the best manner, with superb improvements, well trained servants, and all utensils for immediate, extensive, and profitable operations, and himself healthy, and capable of the most efficient supervision of the whole. The younger starts with nothing—the elder taking all the advantage of the labors of those who had lived before them—not even a foundation to build on, or a stick of timber he could call his own; and all he acquired was only by the dint of hard digging. So far from receiving favors from his rich brother or any other wealthy neighbors living around him, he was compelled to compete with their superior advantages the best way he could, and be liable to a fleecing by any of them, and

especially his rich brother, at every opportunity. Now if the younger brother could only keep from being devoured by the rest, one might conclude he was doing very well; but if, in a short time, he should have secured a settlement of his own, and have every thing growing prosperously around him, so that he was beginning to live well, and educate his children, and have a little prospect of getting up on a level with his neighbors, after a while, if he should pursue the same course; and upon examination, it was found that he was increasing on his capital at the rate of twelve per cent. per annum, while his brother and other richer neighbors were only prospering at the rate of five per cent., which might we conclude was doing the best business, and in which concern would it be most advisable for new adventurers to vest their resources? Though the aggregate amount of the younger brother's stock would be comparatively quite inconsiderable, yet the greater proportionate increase would show that kind Providence was most in his favor, or that his policy was the best, or some thing else, which would evidently entitle him to be preferred as an exemplar to his neighbors. Though the younger brother might be destined to live hard, and work hard, and endure sufferings and

crosses a while longer, are not his prospects and the prospects of his children, as fair for a future as any of them.

So the Cumberland Presbyterians have had their hard and unpopular times. At no period of their history, have they had any thing to rely on, but Him who cannot prosper error or vice, but who, in his very nature, stands opposed to them; and the intrinsic merit of their doctrines and principles. There is no branch of their success but what is evidently attributable to these. It is not to hobbies, to appeals to excited public sentiment and feeling, or to any passing felicitious incidents, throwing a current in their favor, that she is indebted for prosperity and success; nor yet to the efforts of her ministers to modify the precepts of the Gospel to the carnal taste of the world, as the faithful sermons and almost burning exhortations of Brother Noel, to all who remember them, go clearly to testify.

Though Brother Noel was young, and apparently full of years, he generally preached like one on a hasty errand from the throne of God, on business no less momentous than the eternal destiny of immortal beings. It is true, he was not without his failings; and perhaps he had no more prominent one than a want of gravity, in

private circles often allowing his indulgences to border on hilarity and mirthfulness. Yet, in the pulpit, he connected with a dignified solemnity, a zealous suavity, cogent reasoning, an importunate, sympathetic, tender entreaty, most loving expostulations, soft and gentle persuasions, warm and melting exhortations, most stirring appeals, most awakening denunciations, and awful warnings. He was most independent and fearless in vindication of what he believed to be true and right, and pretty severe and rigid in his strictures and criticisms on what, after mature examination, he was satisfied was untrue and pernicious. He was rather tardy in making up opinions, but when once formed, he was prompt, perhaps to rashness, in the expression of them. Persons regularly attendant on his ministry, were very apt either to become wrangling with dislike, or passionately warm in their admiration of him; feelings of indifference about him, were very rare, even in the most obscure walks of society.

As a man, Brother Noel possessed a large share of natural amiableness and sweetness of temper, which was calculated to render him interesting to a worldly man, even in his vices. He was rather severe in his antipathies, and

warmly devoted in his friendships; rather slow to see his faults, but full and prompt in the acknowledgment of them, and most cheerfully anxious to repair injuries he might do, or be the unoffending occasion of to others. Though he was of dauntless courage, when circumstances called for it, yet in the general, he was cautious and timid; from his excessive modesty, he often blushed when no one knew it, and it was extremely difficult for him to regain his usual composure.

On the 25th of October, 1836, he married Miss Nancy Cristler, who was very young, as well as himself. On account of their youthfulness, the marriage did not meet the cordial approbation of the parents of his wife; from which consideration, together with a fear that owing to their youth and inexperience, they might not use, with the best judgment, any means which might be placed in their hands, they were thrown more on their personal efforts, to provide for the common wants of life, than perhaps they anticipated. This was calculated to test the industry and good management of our Brother, whose trial, in these respects, was highly satisfactory to his friends, with only the objection that he became too much enlisted in secular matters,

which was manifest to most who were intimate with him. But while his mind, for a season, seemed to be engrossed in worldly matters, to an irreligious excess, it was much to his credit that he performed, in a manner that was not complained of by his brethren, or criticised to his or the prejudice of the good cause by worldly men, either for matter or manner, more than the ordinary labors of a minister, while he performed almost the entire duties of an industrious farmer.

It would, perhaps, not be improper to say, in extenuation of what might be esteemed his excessive secular feeling, that he possessed, in a most desirable degree, a spirit of noble independence and a burning anxiety to have it in his power to be an actual contributor in worldly means, to the cause of Christ and to the general objects of benevolence and humanity: for he was not only free to give his labor to the cause of his Master, but no sooner had he become released in his pecuniary condition, from the grasp of pressing necessity, than he began, as God prospered him, to contribute of the fruit of his labor to the cause of God—and perhaps few men took greater delight in it than Brother Noel. Though, with some, he had the reputation of

parsimoniousness, it was only because such did not fully know the man. Where conscience and duty dictated economy, he was strictly an economist, and could not well be influenced to appropriate the smallest amount, unless he could be made to apprehend it right and judicious; but only let it appear as a moral or religious duty, or a reasonable call for liberality, and none were more prompt or cheerful to act than he.

We may see the man in this respect, in the following incident: A particular friend and brother preacher, for whom he always professed great attachment, and unto whom he acknowledged himself under unusual obligations, was appointed a Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church, with a special privilege to assume for the Presbytery a certain amount of pecuniary liability, and no more, for such benevolent objects as might seem, in the Commissioner's judgment, to be most pressing, during the deliberations of the Assembly. The minister, in reporting to the next session of Presbytery how he had demeaned himself in the Assembly, gives an account of pledging and paying at the Assembly—being impelled by entirely unexpected emergencies—an amount larger than

that stipulated in his instructions. It was strenuously objected to by our worthy brother, as being such an inexcusable departure from instructions, as should not be sanctioned by the Presbytery. Though several of the members insisted that the Commissioner should not be made personally liable, he contended, in many speeches, that to allow the entire amount would be a bad precedent, which would encourage future Commissioners to transcend instructions, and result, at some future period, in very serious consequences. The Presbytery refused to approve the entire amount, but required of the Commissioner to pay the overplus. No sooner was the vote taken, than he promptly proposed to shoulder a four-fold share of the burden individually, and prevailed with his brethren to take the remainder.

In his efforts to accumulate, which were quite indefatigable, he seemed to have it always in view to get with the express intention of having something to give. It seemed to be his desire to act up to the spirit of the venerable Wesley's counsel—"To get all you can honestly and religiously; save all you can, on the same principles; and then, to make getting and saving virtues, instead of worldliness and parsimony; give

all you can, and bear in mind, that it is much more blessed to give than to get or to save; and that the two former practices, without the latter, cannot fail to run into covetousness, which is vile idolatry and gross surfeiting and sensuality."

When laboring for an income, it is certainly very proper to have an eye to the judicious disbursement of the same; and properly to proportion them, is truly the part of wisdom. To determine whether excess in the one or the other is the greatest evil, is more than we feel competent to do. Perhaps no two characters come nearer to a moral balance, than the prodigal and the penurious; both are extremes, into which men are very liable to run, and which it seemed to be one great object of Brother Noel to endeavor to avoid in every thing. He has often remarked that too much of a thing was almost always worse than none; that extremes and excesses are the great errors in human conduct, both in things sacred and secular; and that there was even a sense in which men could be over-much righteous, by which things good in themselves, by an excess of them, become great and serious evils. What, for instance, is prodigality itself, but an excess of the illustrious and rare virtue of liberality? What is stinginess and

parsimony, but an excess of the important and excellent virtues of frugality and economy? In doctrinal theology, what is fatality, but an excess and pressing out, to an illegitimate tendency, the precious doctrines of free, unmerited grace, and the independent and absolute sovereignty of God, on the other hand? What is Rationalism, Pelagianism, &c., but a straining out to unjust and illogical results the no less important Bible truth of free moral agency in man, attaching an undue consequence to man and his actions? Man is so little disposed to dispassionate consideration, that his want of moderation is not to be wondered at. To arrive at truth in doctrine and theory, men must reason and think dispassionately and logically. It is a strong proof of sincerity and rectitude of intention, to see one disposed to weigh fairly the arguments on both sides of a controverted position. And is it a brilliant moral trait of rare attainment, to find one disposed to estimate arguments with equal strictness, both for and against the position we occupy? To be free from the ebullitions of prejudice, is a most valuable attainment. Then, and not till then, can we look at things in their true coloring, and judge of them according to their true, and not merely their pretended, qual-

ities. Have we not reason to fear that a most alarming proportion of human beings are governed, in most of their conclusions and actions, by unworthy and, most generally, unavowed and dishonest motives? This opinion we found on the testimony of God, Jeremiah xvii. 9: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" and further, "man is full of deceit, and holds fast to deceit, and utters it continually." This view of man's duplicity will certainly be confirmed with every one who carefully studies our nature, in all its secret workings, and witnesses its continual developments in the cunning, deceitful movements of men, in the trafficking operations of the world. Even among those who are recognized by the Almighty as his people, in contradistinction to the people of the world, or children of the wicked one, there is attributed by the unerring Spirit, not only slight imputations and venal sins, but the most disgraceful amount of deceit and wickedness; showing us, most conclusively that man, in his most improved earthly condition, is a pensioner on unmerited grace for every amiable quality, and is compelled to rest on the righteousness of his blessed Saviour alone, for every

thing to recommend him to the favor of God and the pure society of heaven.

As an economist, few men surpassed our youthful brother; he was always cheerful in appropriations, which were reasonable and proper; but to objects manifestly only for mere show and gratification, where there could no profit accrue, he could not be induced to take any part, or make any contributions.

As a specimen of his financial character, we give a copy of rules, hastily drawn up, for an old acquaintance, a blacksmith, for whose success he felt solicitous. As he was passing, and called to get some repairs to his horse's shoes, a conversation about hard times, and the difficulties the young blacksmith had in getting a start in life. At his request, Brother Noel gave him the following rules, as a prescription to remedy his difficulties:

1. Rise early in the morning, and get to work immediately.

2. Talk but little in the shop, except to customers about their work.

3. Be careful to keep good tools, and in good order.

4. Be punctual to fill every promise.

5. Always keep coal, iron, and steel, on hand.

6. Make your work good and strong.
 7. Do not be in too much haste about any thing.
 8. Do not keep too many irons in the fire.
 9. Trade but little, and never aim at speculation.
 10. Be economical in all things, that you may give to good and benevolent objects.
 11. Keep exact, clean accounts, and collect punctually at least once a year.
 12. Dismiss customers who will not settle and try to pay.
 13. Be strictly honest in all things yourself, and deal with every man as you would with a rogue, and you will soon be a good-liver.
- Giving counsel of this kind, and in this way was very peculiar to our young brother; and whenever opportunity offered, either by precept or example, to encourage habits of economy and industry, he would go great lengths to exert his influence. Both in his public and private instructions, he labored to impress his hearers of the very great importance of practising those virtues; and of the great criminality and scandal of living without useful employment. He dwelt on the gospel order of society, and the mutual dependence of the members on each other;

noticing the duties, privileges, and qualifications of each, and endeavored to encourage fidelity and satisfaction in every station, and thus become both the mutual benefactors and beneficiaries of each other; and each contribute to the general happiness, virtue, and prosperity.

There were few better managers of their matters than Brother Noel. Perhaps most men would regard him as rather needlessly timid about going into debt; even with the fairest prospects, he could not be induced to create liabilities, the capacity to cancel which being subject to be crippled by the most remote and even improbable contingency. Even in the purchase of a family residence, though he seemed very desirous to be situated on a spot of ground from which he would not be liable to be removed by men, he would make no purchase until he had the whole consideration provided. He looked upon creating obligations to pay money at a future time, and before it was earned, as not only very injurious, but almost criminal. In this respect, his policy was considered rather strict by his acquaintances generally, and often seemed quite prejudicial to his interests; yet time would almost invariably show that his course was the best, and the unusual prosperity with which he

was favored, seemed very strongly to argue in favor of his policy. His sentiment was, that adventures on our credit was not only periling our living, but our labor, our peace, our friends and friendship, and almost our principles and our salvation. The credit system, he argued, was contrary to the teaching of the Bible, and very improper for Christians to indulge in. One of his earliest friends, for whom he professed great personal attachment, pursued a course different from his, on which account he used often to expostulate most earnestly and affectionately with his friend, who, failing to take the counsel of his youthful Brother, and having a reverse of times to encounter, soon became almost inextricably embarrassed, with an amount of mortification, trouble, and difficulty to endure, which it would not be folly to give a handsome estate to be released from. In this respect we conclude few men will furnish an example more worthy of imitation than the subject of our memoir.

As a citizen, his bearing was noble and highly exemplary; with a good share of public spirit, he was always cheerful in bearing his part in matters of public utility, and was always a warm advocate for the principle of dividing public burdens, not according to the number, but accord-

ing to the strength of the backs to bear them, both in the civil and social, as well as in the ecclesiastical relations of society. He often spoke in terms of just contempt and reproach of the mean and illiberal parsimony of the ostentatious rich, who, to make a great show of generosity on a small scale, and at the least possible expense, would express their superabundant willingness to contribute what they would have you think more than a double share; counting that all beneficiaries, irrespective of their ability or their proportion of benefit, should be equal contributors, which is evidently unjust and incompatible with the teachings of the gospel, which instructs men to contribute to all objects of charity and benevolence as the Lord may prosper them. None were more ready to extend kindness to the necessitous than he: though in some things he might be thought to give sparingly, to the poor, though poor himself, he was a liberal giver. He not only preached very extensively and efficiently himself, and received a very lean support from the people for whom he labored, but he was a liberal personal contributor to ministers laboring in his vicinity.

As a neighbor, he was highly esteemed by the liberal of all denominations, as well as by the

people of the world. As an advocate of peace and mutual accommodation, when called on to adjust little difficulties with brethren, such was his solicitude to secure amity and good feeling, as often to render him more manifestly unhappy than any thing which befel him; where the difference concerned money, he would cheerfully pay a small sum, which other brethren would go to law before the unjust about rather than lose. In matters of his individual concern, he might truly be regarded as acting on the principle of suffering wrong, rather than have contentions with his neighbors.

Owing to his apprehending the Bible in rather a different sense from most of his religious neighbors, he was sometimes unfortunately involved in the unhappy little controversies which result almost unavoidably from the lamentable divisions which now afflict our beloved Zion; in all these he was inflexibly firm in his advocacy of what he apprehended to be the truth; yet so clear, courteous, and liberal, that where he failed to convince, he often conciliated, and made warm friends, even among his theological opponents. While he professed a constant readiness to make almost any sacrifices, which he could regard as compatible with his fidelity to God and

his truth, for the sake of amity and harmonious operation with other laborers in the same great cause, he did not seem ever to forget his solemn ordination vow, to study the peace of the church, as well as its purity, both in doctrine and practice; and of all the sources of his sorrow, none were equal to the want of union and brotherly love among the people of God, on account of which he often expressed his deep shame and affliction. And though in some cases he might be considered rather easily offended, and hard to reconcile, he was always open to conviction, and very prompt and candid in concessions, when he could see his error, and would take unusual pains to repair injuries he may have occasioned, either in feeling or condition.

Few men would go greater lengths to preserve or restore peace among his neighbors, and especially among Christian brethren, than Brother Noel. On several occasions, where dissatisfactions have grown out of little pecuniary indebtedness, he has been known to take pains to assume the amount and pay it, when he apprehended it a matter of mere misunderstanding, and no manifest criminal intention in either of the parties, showing that by the grace of God he

intended to press hard for the prize promised the peace maker.

He has never been known to turn a needy one away empty; though, if suspected of indolence, or other improprieties, he would critically inquire after the condition and manners of the beneficiary of his bounty, when, on the discovery of deceit or unworthiness, he was faithful in rebuking, even to sharpness. Where his brethren in the ministry were in a needier condition than himself, his conduct towards them was full of kindness and liberality. He would not only do them favors out of his own personal resources, but would urge their claims on the public, and often, on the credit of his own labor and popularity as a preacher, he would lift collections for their benefit.

Prompted by his great solicitude for the religious prosperity of the Societies of his charge, he would, at his own expense, hire other preachers to visit them, when the people would not compensate either him or the visiting Brother for their labors. In this respect there was manifestly a kind of exuberance of benevolence which was not calculated to have the best effect, particularly in communities which were very able to defray all reasonable expenses of reli-

gious worship. Becoming accustomed to his gratuitous ministerial labors, the impression became almost unavoidable, that inferior ministerial laborers were not only not worthy to "live in the gospel," but some of them not worthy to be heard, however sound might be their doctrine, pure their theology generally, and fervent their spirit. This trait of character we can only record as a noble, manly, and liberal fault, which, though highly evil in its tendencies, is the very reverse in its design.

To have a friend emulous in his noble bearings, in some respects is truly gratifying to contemplate, but in other departments of life, to find gross and glaring incongruities of a deeply afflicting character, entirely overbears the former qualification. In this respect our Brother was very happily modeled: he did not delight us in the pulpit, and mortify in the private circle; he did not enamor as a preacher, and disgust as a man. The above allusion is about as striking as any in which he could be justly charged with excess. To the mere poetry of human character he made but few pretensions, but in the solid elements of it we find him very uniform. What he was in buying, he was found in selling, the same principles governed him in co-operation

as in opposition; as he was to a friend and neighbor, so he was to enemies and strangers; what he was at church, he was in the street; as he was to the rich, he was to the poor; as he was in the religious, so was he in the civil and social relations; in private he was as in public, a consistent, indefatigable, and exemplary man.

He wished to enjoy the noble privilege of being exempt (not independent) from that abject and servile dependence, by which he might be required to crave, like a beggar, the necessaries of life for a little family—himself and wife—of those very persons who had been served most freely, and fared most sumptuously on the spiritual dainties furnished through the instrumentality of his labor, and by which their nobler parts were nourished and improved; from which, too, they continually received incalculable benefits, and, save a noble hearted few, often not much more sensible of the character of their obligations to him who fed them, than the stupid ox who is fed at his master's crib.

On this subject many do not know, but many more do not consider. For want of consideration, preachers are held bound by many to do a most indispensably important work, which is enough to fill an angel's hands, without aid or

assistance from any human quarter; and if they refuse to do it without fee or reward, and that after the best manner, they are denounced as unprincipled men. It is true that many men have become connected with the Christian ministry, whose worthiness and capacities are such as to make them a heavy drag on the conscientious, studious, laborious, and humble few, who do truly "give themselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word," to their utmost ability. People ought to discriminate, and not censure the worthy with the unworthy; nor lay burdens on preachers which they are not willing to apply the strength of a finger to sustain, and then complain of the minister for worldliness, because he would not submit to humiliations and wants entirely incompatible with the noble and elevated aspirations which Christianity inspires.

There are very few things in the conduct of people professing godliness more deserving of rigorous castigation, than for a rich and affluent community, who spend more for naked luxuries than would be required to sustain five prudent ministers, to give for a support to their preacher scarcely half rations, and require of him full work, and more, not only to preach the word and minister the ordinances to them, but do all

their praying, singing, attention to the sick, poor, and unfortunate; and then, if he finds it needful to give personal attention to digging and tilling the earth, to acquire a little something to indemnify him against the tightest grips of pinching poverty, to be charged with giving undue attention to worldly things. Even some folks, who scarcely ever allow a thought to ascend above the earth and its interests, because they are not preachers, seem to think themselves privileged characters in these respects. They have learned to utter loud complaints against ministers for manifesting even a laudable concern about carnal things, as though the Lord had specially promised to support them in some extraordinary manner.

We trust that we shall not be charged with attempting to justify worldliness in ministers, because we insist that complaints come with an ill grace from those evidently less sublimated in their own feelings, and still less from those who are literally made rich, even in carnal as well as in spiritual things, more by the influence of the minister's labors than they have the justice to acknowledge: for by his teachings and lectures their extravagance, intemperance, and even profligacy, are restrained; and their industry, econ-

omy, prayerfulness, and good management, are exerted, through which they enjoy the blessing and prosperity of heaven. Let cavilers and skeptics say what they may, the knowing world of candid men will see and appreciate the value of the ministers of the cross in all these respects, as well as in the infinitely more important interests of the world to come.

In whatever light we view our Brother, we find him interesting. Owing to the infancy of the churches where he settled, he did not think that he could live conveniently and plentifully by the gospel alone, hence he was compelled to give a portion of his time to farming—in which employ we find him quite a pattern of persevering personal industry, and of judicious skillful management, scarcely equalled by the most experienced farmers.

Brother Noel was not a lazy man. Perhaps the charge was never brought against him, of seeking the ministerial office from such foul motives as indolence, or filthy lucre's sake. The devil and his vile co-adjutors, though they persecuted and fought hard against him, never thought it advisable to bring this charge, so often brought against the ministers of the cross: because his proverbiality for enterprising industry was such,

as to furnish, at any point in the small circle of his acquaintance, so effectual a repulsion of such a charge, as to defeat itself, and retort most heavily on the slanderer. Moreover, the fact of his decided conscientious preferences for, his warm attachment to, and fearless advocacy of the doctrines of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, would prevent his early formation of numerous and permanent friends, so as to derive support from their contributions, or protection from illiberal attacks and unkind insinuations, by the withering force of the current of their popular influence; especially in a region where the people generally were greatly uninformed, and what was much worse, very many grossly misinformed, about our real doctrine and standing as a denomination; and whose very ridiculous narrations of our origin, and rehearsals of our proceedings, had been so unjustly given, as to excite in the public mind a most disgusting apprehension of what we were, and to settle the prevailing prejudices of the community very much against us as a people, and to awaken the peculiar jealousy of other denominations, so as to make us enjoy their fraternal co-operation, if at all, with marked caution, and very eccentric reserve—manifestly fearing all the time that we

were most sedulously seeking some undue advantage, or in some way being enabled to build ourselves up through their assistance, or by availing ourselves of their facilities—seeming to forget the principle of joint heirship with us in the things of religion, and acting as though our prosperity must necessarily result in their loss, or to their detriment or discredit in some way. Particularly in the use of houses of worship has there been shown us a most reckless spirit of wanton opposition: to provocations of which character Brother Noel was peculiarly sensitive; and he often spoke of suffering more from considerations connected with it, than from every thing else in which he differed with his brethren. To be called a Brother, and treated as an enemy, he looked upon as much more grievous than to be denounced as a heretic or enemy, and treated accordingly.

We have been permitted to occupy churches, with the liability of being turned out in the midst of a three or four days' meeting, and then restricted from opening the doors of our church in the house. All which was, perhaps, equally degrading to both parties: they for offering the restrictions, we for accepting the use of the house under them, knowing that it would be unreason-

able to expect a good meeting in such a state of feeling, though even an angel might be there to serve.

On this account our beloved Brother became a zealous advocate for a change in Cumberland Presbyterian policy, at least within the bounds of Kentucky Presbytery, and in all similarly dense communities. Instead of exhausting our strength in camp meeting establishments, to direct and concentrate it more in the erection of permanent, plain, and comfortable houses of worship. These views were very extensively corroborated by many of his brethren: in which respect, it is believed, there is a very wholesome reformation going on throughout the whole body of Cumberland Presbyterians.

To effect this object, Brother Noel was one of the earliest contributors, and in this he had the practice along with the theory. He seemed to take a peculiar pleasure in bearing a part in every effort of the kind within the bounds of the whole Presbytery; and no one labored in that way more cheerfully or more efficiently than he, according to his means. In the few years that he labored in Jefferson county, he was a principal instrument in the building of two new churches, and having them genteelly finished,

which are now permanent and useful property to the church, and in which the Lord has been pleased more than once to revive his work; while scarcely a relic of the old camping establishment in the vicinity survives the ravages of time.

It matters not in how many amiable aspects we may contemplate human character, unless it exhibit the nature and graces of Christianity, it will be but vain and empty show, in the estimation of those who know how to appreciate correctly valuable and solid accomplishments. However imposing the ostentatious parade of fine embellishments, if there be no true religion in the estimate, it must be vastly inferior to the plainest finish. Without this, other attainments may be possessed, not only to no purpose, but manifestly to the great scandal of the possessor. What avail the most splendid parts and handsome improvements, and valuable possessions, if the man be penurious and profligate. It is evident to all that these very elements of good character and usefulness are transformed into the largest contributions to pride and scandal. It needs only to be stated, to be recognized as true, that parts, without principle, are dangerous things. To such want of balance in human

condition, we attribute the desolating eruptions in society which have incessantly perturbed it. Here are found the original sources of wars and rumors of wars, which have alternately disgraced and devastated the earth from age to age, and which have been the materials of discord in all ages and countries. That man, as an individual, or man, in the most extended sense, can never have sweet and solid peace without piety, is a truth clearly taught in God's word, and which is more and more confirmed by the continual developement of the world's history in its most eventful concurrent incidents. Every thing else, without christianity, will leave man a meager mortal, ever striving but never able to rise to that elevation to which pure religion alone is designed and competent to exalt him. By the power of Divine grace, our brother was manifestly more at home in theology and religion, than in any other department of human thought. Here he could not only expatiate to edification and purpose, but show in his life and manners a practical exhibition, and beautiful correspondency with his well made theories. As a specimen of his views and feelings, in many respects vitally important to the enjoyment of saving grace, we give the following letter, addressed a few

months before his last illness, to one of his first and special friends, from the

“VICINITY OF JEFFERSONTOWN, June 26, 1842.

“It is Sabbath morning. I am in the habit of casting my mind around a little on Sabbath morning, and amongst a great many other things, I have thought of you, and feel it to be a shame on me to have neglected writing to you for so long a time; but what advantage will arise from my sending you a letter? Really, I cannot tell, unless you can be provoked to answer it; and then, this appears to be a mere selfish end, as I shall get the benefit, and you the trouble of the whole matter. I am at a great loss to comprehend the naked meanness of my own heart; every peep I get into it, but discovers a new and uglier devil—the name may justly be called legion—and whether it is consistent with a renewed heart, to have so much sin and wickedness in it, is a question that has caused many an anxious thought to my mind.

“There can be no doubt, but that before we get to heaven, we must be sanctified. This life is the summer season, the harvest time, in which the work must be done; if the summer end, and the harvest pass before we are saved, we never will, we never can be saved from sin; conse-

quently, never will or can be saved from hell. Before we are saved from sin, we must be saved from ourselves. The greatest devil I have met with, is my own wicked self; this is the roaring lion that follows me about to devour my peace of mind, my rectitude of conscience, and my hope of heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Now it may not be so with others, but I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity to the law of sin and death. My views of the Gospel are the same as when first I sought the Lord. But, alas, alas! I am viler, meaner, every way; surely, surely, this cannot be the way we are led along in sanctification. I find nothing in the holy scriptures authorizing the doctrine of falling from grace. Well, the question recurs, am I a converted man? I am not free from doubts, you may depend I am not. I am neglectful of my duties of prayer, of watchfulness, of self denial, &c. But do these things give us hope?—Are we saved by works? Surely not; we must have good hearts, good principles, good feelings, and then we will have good works. This makes me tremble. I know my heart is not good; my principles—pshaw, what are they? Have they ever been tried? I may be as ignorant of what

I would do in circumstances calling out my native principles and self, as was the murderer Hazaël; and then my good feelings—good feelings, indeed!—were the bad ones put in the scale against them, the bad would be a thousand fold too many for what might, with many allowances, be called the good ones. O! dear Brother—total depravity is true, at least you may preach it to me in all its fearful extent, and you will find a believer.

“I am driven to the Lord Jesus. He is my only hope—my substitute—my refuge—my horn of salvation—the slaughtered Lamb of God, who as a sin offering, taketh away the sin of the world. He is to me the end of the law for righteousness—he is my active and passive righteousness. I can’t trust myself at all—my experience, my principles, my feelings, my works—no, nothing I have or can be, will I trust for acceptance with the Father. But I do trust in the Lord Jesus; I do hope to be like him; I would imitate him, I would imbibe his spirit, would acquire his graces, would live with his dear people. I am not ashamed to be known as one of his disciples; would that I were more faithful to Him who loved me, and gave himself for me; because all the hope I have is founded

on Him, on Him alone. He shall have all my heart—this mean, wicked heart; and I do now give it up anew into his hands to renew and sanctify it—a habitation of God through the Spirit. But the legal bias of my will and inclinations would the rather lead me to look at my frames and feelings; but these I must leave behind, and look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith. I must not be under the law, but under grace: and then I will not live in sin, but be dead to sin, and live unto God in newness of life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

“I am ashamed to find that all this time I have been writing about myself; but the only excuse I can offer, in truth is, I am more concerned for myself than for any one else; and self is a greater man with me than all the world besides. Now you will see the sin and weakness of my nature in every line I write. I would like to be humble enough not to be ashamed of what is in my heart at all times. The philosophical objection to revealing our own hearts to each other is, we give men too much power over us; but my philosophy in reply is, for every advantage we in this way give others over us, we gain a hundred fold of power over our own pride and devilish selves. The Lord help me not to be afraid of

my own reputation more than of sin and hell fire.

"I have well nigh filled my sheet; and will conclude by saying, that all things with us are going along pretty much after the old sort. L. has been to see us two or three times. The Doctor and —— are still in Louisville. The neighborhood has been dreadfully afflicted with scarlet fever among the children. I am doing all I can to get up Bible Classes and Sabbath Schools in our Churches down here. Nancy is tolerably well only, and I am quite dauncy with my old complaint. Present us affectionately to sister I—— an all inquiring friends. Write to me, if you please, sir, and believe me,

"Yours, in peace and love,

"S. A. NOEL."

Men do not often throw into a letter more of themselves than is thrown into the above. Here we have a kind of miniature portrait of the man—his talents, and their improvement, his morals, his spirit, his theology, and particularly the proof of his own gracious state; a deep sense of his own natural depravity and lost condition by the fall; of the deceitfulness of his nature, the awful demerit of sin; of the entire impossibility of salvation, except through our Lord Je-

sus Christ, who was and is all-sufficient, as our surety, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; in whom even the most guilty and depraved may trust, and find grace and abundant salvation, through the merits of his most gracious and vicarious obedience, both in his life and death; in this he endured its entire penalty, so as to satisfy its utmost claims, and gain the rightful control of its curse, inasmuch as he kept, in the spirit of its immaculate holiness, its entire precepts, and achieved the right to its entire approbation and blessing; so that, in all possible points of view, Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. None seemed more deeply sensible of the great gospel truths than brother Noel. Christ was, in truth, the author and sustainer, the end and finisher of his faith, and hopes, and all his prospects beyond this vale of tears. Though he had often complained of being far behind even what he believed to be the stature of a babe in Christ, yet, with reproaches upon himself for his unfaithfulness—conscious of his almost entire delinquency in Christian graces and duty—like a staunch believer, he would trust in Christ, and claim him as his Redeemer, Shepherd, Friend, and the only Horn of his great salvation.

As a Christian, Brother Noel always manifested great devotion to the cause of his Master.

After he had spent a few years in farming, preaching as much, and as well as he seemed able to do, finding that it was the will of wise Providence not to entrust him with a family of children to raise and educate, he felt it his duty to disenthral himself more from the cares of secular life, and to be given up more consecratedly and continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. He accordingly abandoned his worldly pursuits, resolving to cast himself on the church for the small amount of carnal things his support would require, and give his whole time and talents to the precious cause of Christ. Though he was always very thankful for counsel, he was very hard to influence, contrary to the convictions of his own understanding; not much less than a "thus saith the Lord" could move him. Show him that all hesitancy is abandoned, implicit confidence and prompt action is secured, though every thing else is dark and forbidding. His determination to forsake his farm was conceived and executed in a very short time. A few days afterwards, he wrote to an old friend as follows :

“DEAR BROTHER.—Why, in almost every change occurring either in my person, property, or religion, my mind is instinctively turned towards you, I cannot tell. I suppose it is because I love you, and have confidence in you as a good man. Be this as it may, have just such opinions of me as you choose. I have an itching to address you a letter; but neither manner nor matter may prove interesting, which is quite another question, and you can answer it to yourself much readier, in your own mind, than I can on this paper.

“Know, therefore, that I am well, and so is Nancy. Religious news we have none; prospects are, like the season, (27th Dec.) cold and dreary—the rays of Divine love fall on us obliquely, and our horizon is much obscured; no distant dawning light is seen; only occasional tokens appear, to remind us of the high exaltation we might have enjoyed—but now the leaves have withered; what fruit appeared is gathered, and a most unfavorable religious winter reigns all around. May the Lord revive us. Oh, revive us, all our help must come from Thee. Amen.

“I am in the market place, standing idle, to be hired; no man hath hired me, and yet here I

stand. Exegetically speaking, I must tell you, I have quit farming, and rented my place for five years. The brethren but very poorly sustain me; and could I get meat and bread to eat, and clothes to put on, I am more than willing to devote all my energies and time to the ministry."

Herein, we have further proof of his devotion to the good cause. Hundreds have been pronounced heroes, who would, no doubt, have declined the whole service in which they gained their laurels, had they been restricted in their pay, to food and raiment. For a young man, in the morning of life, competent to lucrative and the higher vocations of men, to volunteer his services, for a bare support, to perform a most laborious work, and not being furnished, then to prosecute his labors at his own expense, certainly argues great firmness and integrity of purpose, particularly when a handsome salary could have been conveniently enjoyed for a much lighter labor, could he have consented to modify his views and teachings to suit the prevailing prejudices of other associations. But with him, a principle was worth a great number of lives; no earthly considerations, with him, would pay the difference between a little error and a little truth. He regarded it as a fearful proof of the

corruption of the age, and even the Church, that sensible men should look upon it as a matter of so little importance, whether they contribute their money and influence to maintain a sound or a less sound form of religious doctrine; and that such large numbers should be induced to embrace almost any kind of theories and usages which were easy and cheap, and which imposed the least amount of self-denial and cross bearing; or that men should view religion as a thing to be submitted to rather than damnation, and from which they would prefer being excused, if they could be happy and have no fears of hell — being governed by views of what they suppose to be the advantages of it, some way, either in time or eternity, more than the intrinsic propriety and principle which must govern all truly sincere and intelligent Christians.

To make a profession of Christianity a kind of sinecure in religion, is surely a most ungracious and criminal course, to which, rightly considered, circumstances of most abject poverty and reproach are infinitely preferable. To seek its profits, its pleasures, its prizes, its glories, and its crown; and yet carefully avoid its crosses, its care, its humiliations, its labors, and even what, in the esteem of proud worldlings or proud

professors, may be regarded its scandal, is certainly showing a spirit of vile speculation or viler peculation on the government of God and the treasury of heaven—a course fearfully deficient of noble emulation, of honorable motive, or of any other worthy and ingenuous incentive, which could actuate a mind enlightened and imbued with the Spirit of Christ.

In the character of Brother Noel, we observe much decency, propriety, and dignity, in his general demeanor. Towards his Creator and his institutions, he was reverent, obedient, grateful, and affectionate. Towards his fellow men, he was sincere, just, courteous, and benevolent. He was a Christian who, in his life and conduct, adorned the doctrine of God his Saviour, by a pious walk and conversation.

All things considered, as a preacher, we do not expect soon to find the Brother who will excel him. He was apt to teach. The extent of his labors, connected with other duties, denied him much leisure for study and formal preparation for the pulpit. We have no knowledge of his writing more than a sermon or two entire; the most he had leisure to do, was to sketch a brief skeleton of the leading ideas of his discourses; for the entire manner, language, unc-

tion, and general details of the whole service, he relied on the promise of him who said, Mat. xxviii. 19, 20: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

To speak so extemporaneously, and yet be so sentimental and interesting as Brother Noel was, so clear, so cogently convincing to the adversaries of the cross, and so full of edification and comfort to the people of God, with no more help from literature, observation, or long experience, was proof very demonstrative of his being prompted from above. Believing that it was his privilege to present a theological platform, which could, with much less difficulty than any he had ever heard of, accommodate the whole orthodox Christian family, he seemed inspired with a power and unction from on high, to present it forcibly and successfully.

Few things gave him more sincere affliction, than the jarring disunion of those he regarded as the people of God. He often spoke of a deep and bitter affliction of soul at the charges and recriminations so common, and so much on the

increase amongst Christians; he said that the tendency of such altercations between them—however well he believed it was often meant by those engaged in it—seemed to have only one constant tendency; which was, to widen and strengthen divisions, and render them still more permanent and incurable; even in popular debates, where truth might be happily elicited, the wanderer is not reclaimed, but, unfortunately, very often rendered more irreclaimable.

Brother Noel often expressed a fear that there were more alarming errors, even with those most approved for orthodoxy and for sagacity among Christians, than they themselves had any thought of. There is great want of love, and Christian kindness, among the most tolerant and harmonious parties in the whole extent of our beloved Zion; and, with general consent, all seem to agree to disagree, and to conclude that it is very pious thus to acquiesce in the perpetuity of division, without even the most distant view of reconciliation, mutually agreeing to denounce each other, or any others, who might attempt to show where the fault was, or to suggest a probable remedy. With some, terms of separation are formally stipulated and settled upon, as the best that can be done. Thus, in the very councils of

the visible Church, plans of division are concocted, in which both ministers and people both agree that the church of Christ shall be split and rent in two, in most palpable violation of the purpose of God, "that they may be one." The Lord says, "My undefiled is but one," yet men dare to say it shall be two ; by which the unity and identity of the true Church becomes so obscured, that even the best informed are very much puzzled to ascertain and discriminate between the true Church and any popular association which may propose itself as such, and in arrogance claim, and in craftiness secure their pretensions, to lord it over the heritage of the Almighty. If internal troubles justify division, how or when can we have an end of them ? Would it not be better to expel, though it might seem like taking half the branches from the stalk ? In these days of sectarian anxieties about numbers, expulsion is liable to be much neglected, greatly to the grief of the godly, to the injury of the good cause, and often to the hardening of the ungodly professor of religion. It is calculated to have the effect on the Church, when done in the fear of the Lord, that judicious pruning has on the prosperity and usefulness of the tree. People expelled, are not to be dismiss-

ed from our affections, our benefactions, our prayers, nor in any sense from being the objects of our best solicitations for their general well-being, and especially for their restoration to the Church and their eternal salvation.

Our brother took a deep interest in Christian union—not as the whale united with Jonah, by swallowing him up—but on the fair, literal, and only practicable principle of reasonable mutual concessions in non-essentials, and charity and toleration in all. He looked upon sectarianism as extremely detrimental to the best interests of the Church, and an obstacle in the way of the world's conversion not much less difficult to overcome than ignorance itself, and as hard to overcome as the most griping coveteousness. Nothing so destroys the enlightened unity and fraternity of God's people; hence, few things more urgently demand the most prayerful consideration of all Christian communities and true philanthropists, than to devise means whereby a cordial and efficient union and co-operation of the seemingly jarring elements of the body of Christ could be happily effected, so as to bring more effectually to bear on the glorious work of the conversion of mankind to Christianity, all the otherwise

neutralized and less operative means and energies of the Churches generally.

We believe that the Church of Christ is one, and ought not to be, or seem to be, divided; and that a more perfect union would, at least, save the immense amount of time, labor, and money exhausted in mere sectarian rivalries, which, if carefully estimated and judiciously expended in the conversion of the world to the religion of Christ, would enable the Missionary Boards to enlarge their operations seven hundred per cent., and leave a large balance to be appropriated to internal improvements within the bounds of christendom. If this one apparently small evil could only be overcome by the people of God, then might it not be truly said, that "The wilderness and the solitary places shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God."—Isa. xxxv. 1, 2.

Every lover of Christ will surely try to do something to promote so very desirable an object. The Church might, I have no doubt, be

arranged into connected and orderly associations, according to sentiment, and have the whole so identified as to be made mutually dependent upon and subservient to each denomination's or individual's good and comfort—like the different parts of a building—and be so compacted and leagued together as to strengthen the general bond of union to each other, and of allegiance to the great and only universal Head, the Lord Jesus Christ. Then, perfect Christian liberty, consistent mutual obligation, and every reasonable conscientious scruple might be enjoyed; and every one might labor to sustain and promote his honest constructions of the holy Bible, in such a way that the very labor would have a tendency to press out, throw off, and divest the whole body of impurities, and unsound sentiments, principles, and practices, as effectually as wholesome exercise contributes to the rectitude of the principles, regularity of the habits, and general healthfulness of a human being.

In the government of the different Churches of the New Testament, it is by no means improbable that there were some differences in polity; yet there was great unity and fraternity of purpose and design. The seven Churches of Asia evidently differed in their condition and

character; but they were clearly under the same banner and controlled by the same identical scepter, and not another; and all harmonizing and co-operating in the same grand enterprise of God's glorification and the wide world's conversion. No doubt they kept these great prominent objects unitedly in view; in their successes were mutual beneficiaries in all the gains, and mutual contributors to all the failures incident to their general work.

Suppose that it were even so, that Paul, and the Churches he served were what, in modern parlance, would be termed more Calvinistic than James or John, and the communities to which they ministered, and they might have some sharp but conscientious differences on questions of theology, as Paul and Barnabas had on questions of policy; yet with sensible, good men, that need not necessitate an absolute separation and refusal to be subject to each other in the greater matters of their common work and joint heirship. To preserve unity seems to be a prominent item in the instructions given by the Holy Spirit to all the Churches, and to each individual; to forbear one another in love, keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, assuring them that there is—not many—but

one body, the Church, of which Jesus is the only head.

Even the beloved John was not free from the spirit of crimination so unhappily indulged in by most people in our time. The disciples disputed who should be the greatest, (Mark ix. 34,) which dispute has not been settled to this day. Very likely a great share of the ostentatious defence of orthodoxy and show of advocacy for reformation, could the secrets of hearts be known by men, as God knows them, would be seen to be produced by the same strife—who should be the greatest. Jesus, to allay this strife, gave, particularly to the twelve, a most forcible and pertinent discourse on humility; and the inestimable good accruing from it, when even the humble and devoted John, to present himself, perhaps, in the popular light of a bold champion of orthodoxy, says, “Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followed us not; and we forbade him, because he followed not us. But Jesus said, forbid him not; for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name that can lightly speak evil of me, for he that is not against us is on our part.”

Herein the great Law-giver and Teacher certainly rebukes the spirit of sectarian intolerance.

ance, and authorises the belief that good and useful men may differ, and pursue different courses, and neither thereby sacrifice his right to the others' fellowship, nor the approbation of his great Master.

Our position will be objected to on the ground that the difference here mentioned related only to matters of policy or practice; and did not immediately concern the great doctrines of religion. Strange, that, when it suits men's purpose, practice is the great desideratum in religion, and on other occasions, principle, and anon, sound doctrine is the indispensable thing to constitute acceptableness with God. In our apprehension, all these, without charity will be empty and unavailing. That unity and soundness of sentiment or doctrine should be so much more important, only as it is the foundation of unity and soundness of feeling and principle or correspondency of practice, we do not see; neither is it defined whether the nonconformity of the person forbade by the Apostle, was in doctrine, policy, or what it was in. We have as much data for the conclusion that it was a matter of doctrine, as any thing else; if so, it certainly goes far to condemn the separations indulged in among the people of God.

In the United States of America, every state has some thing in which it differs from its sister states—in political doctrines, institutions, economy, &c.—yet all the states make only one government; known throughout the earth, not as many, but as one political body, and hence revered and felt in its influence on the citizens of the world, in any of its enterprises, to much better purpose than if it were divided into separate and distinct little sovereignties, each one being compelled to give a good share of its attention to protection from the other, and scarcely, in any instance have the liberty of combining forces to promote the common interests. If union is strength, politically, why not ecclesiastically; as the Lord God is the God of nations and armies, as well as King in Zion. If civil states can combine and amicably harmonize, so as to concentrate their energies in the improvement of the earth and its inhabitants in physical, civil, literary, social, and moral respects—is it not a shame on the professed subjects of the Prince of Peace, that there should be suspected to be a less amount of amicable co-operation, union and concentration of powers amongst them—seeing that their cause is the greatest, best, and neediest of all—especially when there is nothing within

the bounds of human effort so much needed to remedy the distress and destitution of the Church, as unity and co-operation.

That there might be formed such an ecclesiastical confederacy as to avoid by far the greatest amount of the occasions for unkind collision among christian friends, we have no doubt. O, that it could only allay the feeling of predominancy, so as to make it entirely an inconsiderable matter as to which of the denominations outnumber or excel in wealth, or any thing else, except genuine piety, and such things as are essential contributors to it, and cause members of the same family or citizens of the same village, who recognize each other's piety, to feel that it is no longer yours and ours; but all the time ours in Christ, our impartial Saviour, who "is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him."

O, that the time may be hastened, when the Church shall be one, as the Father and Son are one. This was often the prayer of our lamented Brother, who possessed not only superior intellect, but superior piety. As a proof of it, wherever he labored, he was caressed as a man, and highly admired as a preacher. In his ser-

mons he was not often confined to set forms or exact measure of time. When circumstances called him out, he often displayed a most sprightly genius in his original conceptions, lofty descriptions, striking analogies, and most pathetic and forcible appeals. He had clear views of divine truth generally, with a most happy facility in its communication. He was bold with meekness. He often stood, as it were, on Calvary's bloody heights, and preached, in swelling, bursting, moving strains, the Passion of the Cross;—then on Mount Sinai he took his stand, to assert and enforce, in boldest tones—"as one having authority, and not as the scribes"—the claims of the violated law. The secret of his greatness was, that while he wept, he towered in majestic strains, and impressed most deeply his enlisted auditors—while he labored to get deep in the dust, at the foot of "the Cross, all stained in hallowed blood," its long since risen and ascended Victim would lift him up on high, in tracing His glorious exaltation to the midst of thrones and dominions in Heaven. His manner in the pulpit was peculiarly interesting and happy—not stiffened with gravity, nor in any sense mean in his condescensions; he had great self-possession, not elated with his success or depressed with his

difficulties. His voice was clear, articulate and very melodious; he had little acquired, but much of natural eloquence; few men of his age, however superior their acquirements, could make more efficient and heart stirring extemporaneous appeals; few had a more intimate acquaintance with human nature, and knew better how to select, and apply more efficiently, the great remedies provided in the gospel for its entire reclamation. He did "not strive about words to no profit," "but was a workman that needed not to be ashamed," rightly "dividing the word of truth." 2 Tim. ii. 15.

As a Presbyter, Brother Noel was firm and independent; courteous in claiming, and always judicious and considerate in the exercise of his rights. He was particularly tenacious about acting understandingly in every thing he did. He was a strict adherent to his apprehensions of the holy Bible, and the authorized standards of his Church. His caution stands written in the records of his Presbytery, as a rebuke to the rashness of some of his senior and more experienced brethren, and as a proof to all, that mere gray hairs are a poor indemnity against error. He always regarded punctuality in attending the judicatories of the Church, as a very important

duty of a minister. He looked upon the business there, in the light of arranging the work in the Lord's vineyard, and assigning laborers to each department, as it may seem to need; and of inquiry into and making an estimate of the condition of the whole work. The minister or Church officer who never attends the judicatories of the Church expresses great indifference about its prosperity. O, how interesting to meet the grave assembly of the saints and ministers of the Cross, who come together, if they come as they should, not for debate and long speech making, but prayerfully to deliberate, consult, inquire into, and overlook the more extended interests of our beloved Zion. Here we see the weeping yet rejoicing minister meeting his fellow soldier, who has stood by his side, and fought through many a battle. The reminiscences of former cares and difficulties through which together they have waded, are calculated to inspire the holiest sublimations, the firmest allegiance to the great and glorious King, and to increase and strengthen those indissoluble ties by which they stand so sacredly pledged to their God and each other by their lives and their all, that they will stand by the streaming banner of the blood-stained Cross of Christ; that they will

be subject to their brethren in the Lord, and be zealous and faithful, as God may enable them, to maintain the truths of the Gospel, and the purity and peace of the whole Church of God in every land, whatever persecution, opposition, or hardship may arise unto them on that account; and to be more faithful in public and private duties as Christian ministers, endeavoring to be more exemplary in their walk and conversation before the world. Here come the sedate and old fashioned representatives of the Churches, the faithful guardians of the rights of their unsuspecting constituents. Here, too, are the timid and inquiring probationers for the holy ministry, tremblingly contemplating its tremendous duties—a care, next to the care of all the Churches, of the most weighty and responsible character to the judicature—and now, with eternity in view, with heaven and hell and the value of immortal souls, and even above these, the bleeding cause of Christ, and the injured honor of God before this solemn thinking assembly, who can be there and not cry, “who is sufficient for these things,” and not feel a grievous, an awful weight of responsibility upon them; enough—unaided by Divine Grace—to crush a seraph’s mind. Yet it is a burden essential to

be borne; and, in one sense, it is a strangely delightful responsibility — for, while it presses and afflicts, it strengthens and comforts.

To attend these meetings was believed by our Brother to be full of duty and of profit. It is, moreover, a truth which cannot be successfully controverted, that those ministers and those Churches who neglect these meetings—in the absence of providential hindrances—do decline in religion, and often become burdens to themselves too heavy to be borne, when the good ones seek fellowship elsewhere, and the very society becomes extinct. Though we may not see the philosophy of it, yet the facts, which are stubborn things, are glaringly prominent. Few are properly sensible of the importance of punctuality as Presbyters in order to their usefulness as ministers, or we are satisfied our absentees would not be so frequent.

That Brother Noel had his faults, we do not pretend to question; to advert to, and criticise them, we would not forbear, were we as familiar with them, and regarded our animadversions on them as desirable, or as likely to edify and do good, as our notice of his virtues. Indeed, we have been amply anticipated on this subject by those who have gone before us, as his lot was so

cast in life as to render him much more liable to be noticed for his bad than for his good qualities. Being taken from the circle of his juvenile acquaintances and early friends, and placed at a point, in the very beginning of his ministry, where all around was quite a missionary field for one of his theological caste—having to make character, friends, and churches for himself, much as religion is calculated to improve our natures, it is a fact, he found many more to reproach than to aid him; and we would be happy to record that none among the former were professors of religion.

It was, perhaps, one of Brother Noel's greatest frailties, to betray dissatisfaction under calumnious insinuations; in this he perhaps did himself more harm than in any other indiscretions. It is often decidedly the best policy not to retort, however it might be justified. In carnal estimation, there are few things regarded more dastardly than to give your coat to him who would take away your cloak; or, being smitten on one cheek, to turn the other; or, being compelled to go a mile, go two with the oppressor. These maxims, we know, are not well relished by imperfect men, yet, being of divine authority, are evidently important; and

no doubt we often fail of accomplishing much by neglecting to observe them. If he had a bad ruling passion, perhaps it was vindictiveness, though many times we know he was ready to forgive. If he had used undue severity towards his enemies—where he believed them very wantonly and unprovedly such—none would go farther to secure reconciliation and amity than he. On the other hand, he was ardently devoted to his friends, of whom he had a large and most respectable number, and who most strongly and cordially reciprocated his kind feelings.

Though his enemies—who were, we think, universally so because he told them plainly what he believed to be the truth—would, perhaps, gladly have reproached his name and memory, which they knew would be dear to the recollection of many, and that he, being dead, would still speak, unless some kind of tarnish be fixed on his name; yet, we feel truly grateful to be abundantly justified in recording, to the shame and confusion of those, who, without cause, were his enemies, that the annals of sacred biography scarcely presents a more untarnished and desirable character than his. Many, who we fear envied him, were constrained to acknowledge

his worth. It is due to his memory and his friends to say, that few men have died more universally beloved by those who knew him, and those who knew him best prized him highest. He died on the 1st of November, 1842, at the house of Brother Amos Seabolt, where for some time he had made his home. He was buried at his uncle Elias Christler's, near Calvary Meeting House. His death was sincerely lamented by people of all classes, and his burying and funeral were numerously attended. He had no children, but left the wife of his youth to mourn the loss of an affectionate husband, with a large circle of kindred and friends.

In Brother Noel the Church lost a steadfast member, an able preacher, and a wise counselor; the poor lost a friend, the saints a comforter, and the poor sinner a faithful reprovcr. In his labors as a minister, he happily connected the beauties with the solids, the light with the life, and the power with the form of godliness. Surely he preached Christ and him crucified, as well as a Prophet and King to teach and to rule, and a Priest to suffer and atone for sinners; in doing which, it was abundantly manifest that he sought not to please the flesh but the Spirit.

Although he was poor in worldly pelf, he was a large contributor to the cause of Christ. He had an intellect above the price of "yellow trash," which, if wealth could buy, many a coffer, crowded with the gold of the opulent, would be emptied to purchase it for their blockheaded sons and doltish daughters.

For one of commanding talents to consecrate himself to the Christian ministry in a popular, affluent denomination, where handsome livings are conveniently enjoyed, and where it is regarded as a proof of piety and very important good work in the laity to afford them, requires but little zeal and martyr-like devotedness to the cause of Christ and true benevolence. But to engage in the ministry in a poor, persecuted denominations, with almost no prospect of living by the gospel, and to labor during life to prepare a people, on improved theological basis, to support as they ought the next generation of preachers, bespeaks a highly commendable and noble zeal, and truly ardent love for God and the perishing souls of men. These are a part of our Brother's credentials, whose object ever seemed, not to court the applause of men, but to save the souls of those who heard him.

Many are the living witnesses who delight to testify that his preaching was not in vain in the Lord. We doubt not but in the day of eternity, though his career was short, his crown will be bespangled with many a brilliant star.

END OF THE MEMOIR OF NOEL.



SERMONS.

SERMON I.

BY REV. SAMUEL AYRES NOEL.

On the internal call of God to the work of the Ministry.

Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.—MARK XVI. 15.

This command was given by our blessed Saviour to the eleven Apostles, immediately before His ascension. Solemn charge! Arduous undertaking! Eleven illiterate men, fishermen of Judea, are to preach the gospel to every creature, and, with their successors, ultimately to convert the world. At the time this command was given, our world presented one awful scene of human corruption; "darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people;" all knowledge of the true God had become buried under the smotherings of superstitions, or lost in the obscene rites of Paganism, except what

was to be found among the Jews, and a very few others. The Apostles went forth with tears, "sowing precious seed;" God gave the increase, and in a short time Christian churches were formed throughout the land of Palestine, and in most, if not all, of the provinces of the Roman Empire. Since their day, many faithful men have been raised up, under the fostering care of the Great Head of the Church, to carry on the labors of the vineyard. Under their ministrations the church has increased in numbers, and grown in strength. Though persecution has ignited its fires, and invented instruments of torture; "the heathen have raged, and the people imagined a vain thing; the kings of the earth have set themselves, and the rulers taken counsel together, against the Lord and His Anointed, saying, let us burst their bands asunder, and cast their cords from us:" still the original command has been obeyed, and the religion of the cross has come down to our time, and reached our happy country, with all its gracious blessings. God has his church in the land, and Christ his ministers, who feel under high and sacred obligations to "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

On this subject, we will, in the *first* place,

make a few remarks on ministerial character. *Secondly*, speak of what he is commanded to preach—"the gospel. *Thirdly*, the most successful manner of discharging this trust.

I am ever sensible of my incapacity to preach as I should to my dying fellow men, but am almost forced to say, more so than common on this occasion. Not that I am afraid of a few faces of flesh and blood, nor, as I trust, because I fear the weight of the cross, and would be glad to lay it down, but because I am called to address men of like passions with myself, engaged in the same all important and solemn work: to preach to preachers. And should I succeed in fastening your minds upon the subject, and give a wrong touch to the ark, and gain your approbation at the loss of my Master's, unborn generations might lament my error, and bewail my sermon to all eternity; as unimportant as it may appear to a carnal mind, to us it is of most thrilling anxiety.

We then remark, 1. A gospel minister should be a converted man. The very nature of his work makes this necessary. He is to preach "glad tidings of great joy;" but how can he do this when he has never felt that gladness and joy of the Holy Spirit? How can he be

“anointed to preach good tidings to the meek,” when the pride of his own carnal heart has never been subdued; or “bind up the broken hearted,” while he has a guilty conscience; or “proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound,” when he is a slave to sin, and a bond servant to the devil; or proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God, to “comfort all that mourn,” while his heart rankles with pride, self-conceit, vanity, and “enmity with God,” and his eyes see no beauty in holiness, or deformity and evil in sin. “If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.” Hence, the first and most important qualification is a change of heart, a converted soul; “to be born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” The gospel minister, then, must be a converted man. Oh, how incongruous for the preacher to break the bread of life to others, while starving to death for it himself. We are sorry for his own soul; and most sincerely pity the condition of his flock, plodding along to hell after a blind guide—both will fall into the ditch.

2. The minister of the gospel is *called of God* to preach. As there are different senti-

ments on this point, we will be more particular in stating our arguments for its proof. We have heard public teachers, who are opposed to this doctrine, say, they are not called; we have no doubt but that they speak the words of truth and soberness in saying so. Others, who preach, or rather have preached, to some extent successfully, are ready, in consequence of a late system of reformation, to say, they never were called. To such we would say, come, and let us reason together.

First, the delivery of the talents may be regarded as the call. It is the call of Providence, and that is the call of heaven. In this case the supply of means is the requisition of the duty; for example, when we find ourselves in possession of powers, faculties, and opportunities, it matters not whether arising from the advantages of fortune or station, or from the endowments of mind, or faculties of our souls, we need ask for no further evidence of the intention of the Donor. We always see, in that intention, a demand upon us for the use and application of what has been given. When the Master places a tool in the hand of his servant, it is that he may use it to some good purpose; now this is a principle of natural as well as revealed religion. God never

requires of us "according to what we have not, but according to what we have." This requisition, growing out of the bounty of Heaven, is founded in justice, and amounts to a solemn call to discharge the duty.

Again, how can we account for the wonderful fact, that in every age of the world God has had his church in the earth among men, and a standing ministry in that church, exactly adapted in character, intellect, and piety, to her exigencies. Now, you would say, you can only account for the preservation of the church amidst the flames of persecution, and the rise and fall of empires, by supposing that the invisible hand was underneath her, and the God of Israel was "round about her as a wall of fire." Well, in like manner, we cannot suppose that men would have taken it into their heads to become martyrs to fame, to earthly riches, or preferment among men; yet it is a fact, that many became martyrs for the purpose of preaching the gospel. Do you imagine—can you, upon principles of common sense, suppose—that human beings would have undergone all that ministers of the gospel suffered, "enduring the cross, and despising the shame," as they have done, unless they had been fully persuaded it was their duty to preach—and

a duty imposed, not by man, nor any set of men, but a call from God himself. And this is further argued, when we notice how precisely the ministry of the church has suited her exigencies. In fact, but for the blessed chain of evangelical ministers that have shone at different ages, the world would be at a great loss for the smallest ray by which to trace the history of the church.

Look to the days of primitive Christianity, and you will notice, as the church was persecuted, she had her venerable Polycarp, and her martyred Justin and Ireneus, to stand and to fall in her defense. When Arianism began to spread its blighting system almost all over the church, behold her Athanasius stands forth for her rescue. When Pelagianism, with its withering kindred heresies, makes its appearance, see Augustine pleading for the doctrines of grace. When the primitive simplicity of the church is converted into the senseless forms and tiresome ceremonies of a heathenish temple, then the two witnesses prophecy in sackcloth, Peter Waldo comes forth, and John Wickliff closely follows. When darkness seems again about to cover the earth, then Luther, and a whole train of reformers, rise up all at once, and “with the sword of the Spirit”—that good old Jerusalem blade—

they cut and slay the enemies of the truth, until the church comes forth "as fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." And even in this, our day, the ministry are quite suited to the necessities of the church, in that there is a great variety in their talents: one is strong in argument, another is eloquent in speech, a third a Boenerges, or son of thunder, a fourth a Barnabas, or son of consolation. Now, whence all this? Is it because the church has such a knowledge of her own necessities, and that ministers have this knowledge of the church, and of the world, and of themselves? Or is it not more reasonable to say, "when the enemy comes like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against him."

Again, we argue this from the fact, that God anciently called the ministry of the church, and we have no intimations in Scripture that He does not call them now as then. If we can establish this proposition, we have a very strong argument in favor of our view of the subject. We know but very little about the church before the days of Abraham, hence we will commence our review from his time. I believe it is generally admitted that the church was organized in the family

of that Patriarch, and that he was its minister. Was Abraham called of God? "Now the Lord said unto Abraham, get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation; and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. He was evidently called from his father's house, to a peculiar country, for the accomplishment of the Divine purpose and goodness concerning our fallen race: "in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." After this the Lord appears to have called succeeding Patriarchs to officiate as the ministry of the church, until the days of Moses. And was Moses called? The wonderful appearance of the burning bush is too notorious to need a quotation. And then, after Israel left Egypt, Aaron and his sons became the standing ministry of the church; and, as Paul says, "let no man take this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron."

That the Prophets were called of God, no one pretends to doubt, who believes in revelation.

The Apostles were called by our Saviour himself, while on earth. This, then, has been the standing order of God's house from the beginning; and now it remains for a successful opposer to show a passage of Holy Scripture, which says, either expressly or by implication, that this order has been interrupted, and this Divine right given up. The only objection of any importance we have ever heard alledged against this argument, is, the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles were inspired, and, in attestation of their Divine call, wrought miracles; can you work miracles? Then, say our opponents, as Nicodemus said to our Saviour, "we know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do the miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." One remark, I think, will dispel the mist of sophistry this futile objection throws around our argument. A call from God to engage in the work of the ministry, and inspiration, are two things entirely distinct from each other in their nature; miracles are necessary to prove inspiration, but not a call to preach. You will also notice that the call of the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles to preach, or minister in holy things, was one thing, and their qualification or inspiration was another thing; and the

former usually prior to the latter. There have been many called ministers, but few inspired men.

For the sake of illustration, we will give you a few examples. Let us take the case of Moses for our first. Now, if a call, because it is miraculous, be identified with the inspiration—the direct plenary inspiration of God's Holy Spirit—surely, Moses must have been thus inspired at the very instant he was called; for it was of a most wonderful character, truly marvelous indeed! A bush burning, and not consumed! “And Moses said, I will turn aside and see this great light, why the bush is not burnt; and God called unto him, out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses!” Now I inquire, was this a call from God? It cannot be denied. Well, was it inspiration? Did this call, abstractly considered, inspire Moses? I answer, No! Because, after he had been informed of the object of this wonderful occurrence, and began to make his apologies for not being disposed to obey the mandate of Heaven, and every objection had been removed by the mouth of the Lord himself, and the power of working miracles had been conferred, this is the language of God to him: “Now, therefore, go and I will be

with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say." Again Moses said, "O, my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt; and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and He said, is not Aaron, the Levite, thy brother? I know that he can speak well; and also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee, and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart;" and "thou shalt speak unto him, and put words into his mouth, and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and teach you what ye shall do." You see that Moses had been *called* before all this. He was called of God to go and bring Israel out of Egyptian bondage, but still he was not then, you will notice, just then, inspired; hence the Lord says, "I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say." His *call* was one thing, and his inspiration another; and the *call* was first. Here is one "*called and sent of God*," but not inspired yet, and in all probability he was not until he reached Egypt.

We present the call of Isaiah as our next example. The Prophet is astounded and overwhelmed with a vision of the Lord in his glory, and cries out, "woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips; I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes

have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts." When his iniquity was taken away, and his sin purged, he says, I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, here am I, send me; and He said, go." Now here is the call; then comes the message he was to deliver. This was inspiration, which shows very clearly to our apprehension, that the Prophet was first called and commanded to go, and then inspired by the message delivered unto him, which was to be announced to the people.

Let us refer to the call of the Apostles, and we think we shall see clearly and plainly the great distinction between a call from God to preach, and inspiration. None deny that *they* were called of God, too; and to us it does not appear, from what is written, that they were inspired until after the day of Pentecost. Indeed, we have no question of this, when we notice, that even after our Saviour's resurrection, they were so ignorant of the nature of his kingdom as to ask him, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"—meaning the Jewish aristocracy. Yet they were called ministers, and had been our Saviour's companions in almost all his travels. Again, we find

this remarkable language in the Acts of the Apostles xiii. 2—4. “The Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted, and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost,” &c. Now they were undoubtedly called and sent of God; yet we have no good reason to suppose these brethren were always inspired after this. Though Saul or Paul was filled with the Holy Ghost, and performed a miracle by striking Elymus the Sorcerer with blindness—as the connection of the above quotation will show—yet that does not prove him to have been always, after this call, an inspired man;—because, “Barnabas determined to take with them John Mark, whose sir name was Mark; but Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work; and the contention was so sharp between them that they departed asunder one from the other.” Now if their call to preach Christ was inspiration, they were poor Apostles, and had lost call, inspiration and all, on the occasions above referred to; and as they “departed asunder”—because they could not agree together—were

destitute of all authority to preach; for mark, they were not both right; one was in the wrong, at least, and perhaps both. When the contention became so sharp that they separated, they could not have been inspired on that occasion; yet the vows of God were upon them—they were called, and it was their duty to go and preach.

This not only shows the distinction between a call to preach and inspiration, but also completely answers an objection urged against a called and sent ministry. It is said, if you were called of God you would not differ as you do. Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Cumberland Presbyterians, and all would see eye to eye, and come into one common agreement, and speak the same things. The above circumstance shows how unfounded in truth is this objection. If such men as Paul and Barnabas, who were called and sent of the Holy Ghost, should differ warmly and the contention become sharp about who should go with them on a preaching tour; no marvel if the best of us should differ in this corrupt age.

From all the foregoing we conclude, that as God anciently called men of pure hearts and clean hands, to minister in holy things, he does it still; because inspiration is one thing, and a call to the ministry is another. The former has

long since ceased, because the word of God is complete, the object for which it was given is accomplished. The latter necessarily must remain; the reasons for which it was first given still exist and are in full force, and will be to the latest ages of time.

Now, as it regards miracles. The days of miracles are past and gone; the object for which they were performed has been accomplished. They were wrought to confirm the message delivered by the called minister—which was original, came immediately from the Spirit, or historical, or of recent occurrence, and of vital importance to the Gospel plan of salvation, which had not been already attested to the minds and senses of the people—such, for example, as the death, resurrection, and ascension of our Saviour, and the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. All of this being long ago established by signs and wonders, it is not necessary to the proof of these things now that the preacher should work miracles. If miracles were every day occurrences, they would no longer be miracles, but become the common transactions of life, which would destroy miraculous character, and hence they would answer no good purpose.

Again, the minister makes no pretension to inspiration. Were he to do that, you would have a right to demand miracles in proof. But the call is merely an impression in his mind that it is his duty to preach that Gospel already confirmed and settled forever to be the truth of God, by the display of supernatural wonders and credentials from heaven—by miracles. We have as much right to require you to work miracles to prove your faith in Jesus Christ, as you have to demand miracles of us to prove our call to the holy ministry. “These signs shall follow them that believe in my name, they shall cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them, they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.” Now because the primitive disciples were endowed with such miraculous powers, and because our Saviour has said, “these signs shall follow them that believe,” does it follow that none are believers but such as can work miracles? Surely not. Just so in the case of a call to the ministry. If one must work miracles to prove his call, the other must do so to prove his faith; you may take either horn of the dilemma.

Lastly, let us present our positive proof in

the express language of Scripture. The Apostle Paul, speaking of the authority and honor of our Saviour's priesthood, says, "and no man taketh this honor to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." It is said this has reference to Christ's calling, and not to priests of our day. True, and hence the force of the passage. With all his uncreated authority, our High Priest did not interrupt the order of God's house in this matter; because Christ glorified not himself in calling himself to be made an high priest, but He that said unto him, "Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee;" as he saith, also, in another place, "Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec, called of God," &c. Now if the priesthood be so sacred and responsible an office that Jesus would not take it upon himself without a Divine call or vocation, how dare a worm, an insignificant fellow mortal, take this honor to himself, and vaunt himself to all around that he never was called. Such men are like those spoken of by the Lord, in the fourteenth chapter of Jeremiah—"The Prophets prophecy lies in my name. I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them; they prophecy unto you a false vision and divination, and thing of nought

and the deceit of their heart.” Again, in the twentieth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, when Paul was addressing the Elders of the Church at Ephesus, he says, “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers,” &c.; and in his letter to Timothy, he writes, “wherefore, I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands; for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind; be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, nor of me, his prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, [meaning the ministry,] according to the power of God, who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling,” &c. Timothy, I suppose, was not inspired, but undoubtedly he was called to preach. Again, Paul says, “That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us,” and “Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ; no man that warreth, entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier;” that is, chose him or called him to be a preacher, as the connection will show.



Another positive proof may be found in 1 Corinthians twelfth chapter, in which a manifest difference is made by the Apostle between working miracles, gifts of healing, and divers kinds of tongues. But amidst the diversity of gifts, there is but one Spirit, and though a difference of administration, the same Lord, who hath chosen in his church at different times and ages, "first Apostles; secondly, Prophets; thirdly, teachers; after that miracles; then, gifts of healing, helps, governments, and diversities of tongues."

In the Epistle to the Romans the inquiry is made, "How shall they hear without a preacher and how shall they preach, (meaning to purpose) except they be sent; as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good." Our Saviour, well knowing that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," was affected, no doubt, at the reflection, "how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preach, [to purpose] except they be sent." Hence, when he saw the multitude, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted and were scattered abroad as sheep having no Shepherd. Then said he unto his disciples, the harvest tru-

ly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest to send forth more laborers into his harvest.

O my brethren, let the condition of the world and especially our Presbytery, affect your hearts, as the scattered and perishing multitudes did our Saviour; and pray ye the Lord of the harvest to send forth more laborers into the vineyard.

Our last remark on ministerial character, is that he should have authority from his Church or Presbytery to preach. Now some are opposed to this—to all the formalities of licensing and ordaining men to preach the gospel. They say that if it be your duty, or you be called of God—go forth, stop not, confer not with flesh and blood. But on an examination of the history of the Church, you will discover that all things should be done decently and in order in this respect; and that licensing and ordaining men to preach the Gospel is of Divine authority, and has ever been one of the standing orders of God's house or Church. We will give several examples. We find on record in the standard of our faith—the holy Scriptures—in the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, a case in point. The Saviour had just ascended. The Apostles having just returned from the Mount

called Olivet to Jerusalem, were assembled in an upper room, and were engaged with one accord in supplication and prayer, the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brethren. "Then Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples," and spoke of the fulfillment of prophecy in the fall of Judas, who was guide to those who took Jesus; of the purchase of Potter's field with the reward of iniquity; of Judas' awful death; and quoted a declaration from the book of Psalms; then says the Apostle, "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be *ordained* to be a witness with us of his resurrection. And they appointed two." "And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place."

We notice two important items in this quotation; first, a reference to a long and intimate acquaintance and trial — companied with us all the time, beginning from John's baptism, to the as-

cension of Christ;—secondly, a solemn ordination, by a short and comprehensive prayer to God. O how affecting the scene! The world is enveloped in moral darkness—the Saviour is gone, ascended on high—and here are a few disciples of the despised and persecuted Nazarine, in an upper room, hid from the Jews, ordaining one of their number, to fill the place of a traitor, who betrayed and sold his Lord and Master. The lot has fallen on Matthias. Methinks I see him kneel down, the disciples gather round to lay their hands upon his head, and Peter, who had proposed the course, leads in prayer, and commends him to God and the word of his grace, to “go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”

It may have been too precipitate in them to attempt to fill the apostolic chair, left vacant by the fall of Judas; as God alone claims the prerogative to give apostolic authority; and subsequently did call Paul to fill up the vacancy made by the fall of Judas. Nevertheless, it was not wrong for them to authorize any one of their number that God might designate, by the imposition of hands and prayer, to preach salvation to a ruined world.

But again, we give another example, recorded

in Acts xiii. We have quoted this once already to prove one point, we give it now to prove another. The Prophet and teachers which were in the Church of Antioch ordained Barnabas and Saul in the following manner: "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, separate Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted, and prayed, and laid their hands on them they sent them away." Here is an ordination performed almost precisely as we perform it in this our day; and mark, the Holy Ghost said do this. Once more, "neglect not the gift which is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with laying on of the hands of the Presbytery," is the language of Paul to Timothy. Only notice this passage, "gift in thee, which was given thee by Prophecy." That is, Timothy was *taught* theology, he studied and gave himself to reading, and "the laying on the hands of the Presbytery." Then he was ordained, perhaps, precisely as a young minister enters into holy orders these days.

Brethren, we are about to engage in very solemn business. The business of Presbytery is very important indeed; because we are not only called to consult the best method of carrying on

the labors of the vineyard, but also to introduce new laborers, by the authority vested in us as a Presbytery, to say to our brethren who are looking forward to the holy ministry, go and preach Jesus Christ and him crucified to the scattered and perishing multitudes of Adam's fallen family. The responsibility is truly great; but it would be better, perhaps, to keep two back under serious impressions, than to push one forward, not moved by the Holy Ghost, to the work; for, while a called, devoted, holy minister is one of Heaven's richest blessings to the Church and world, an uncalled, unholy and carnal preacher is one among the greatest curses ever sent on any people. About the acquisition of numbers to the ministry, we should not be too eager; but, like the Apostles, when about to lay their hands on the first head, in order to ordination, pray God, "who knoweth the hearts of all men, to show whether of these Thou hast chosen." A sufficient time should be allowed to make a full proof of their gifts and vocation. And after all, we should fear and tremble, lest we lay our hands on unworthy heads, and become accessory to a curse upon the Church and the world. May the Lord help us to feel our responsibility, and to act according to the rela-

tion we sustain to the Church and the immortal souls of men.

2. In the second part of this discourse we promised to speak of what the minister is commanded to preach. Our text says, "Preach the Gospel to every creature." The Gospel, then, is to be preached, which is defined to be "the revelation of the grace of God to fallen men, through a Mediator." Surely, this is good news, glad tidings of great joy to all men; for it is to be preached to every creature. The above definition is rather to be preferred than any other we have ever seen; because it appears to embrace every possible meaning attached to the word *Gospel*.

In preaching the Gospel, then, I am persuaded the preacher will not err by beginning with the work of creation, and going on to show the purity and innocence of our first parents, and their ability to have kept, yet their freedom to disobey the law of God. And permit me to remark here, that without such an agency as this, I cannot see any possible foundation for moral government at all. Moral good and evil is said to be "the conformity or disagreement of our voluntary actions to some law, whereby good or evil is drawn upon us from the will or power of

the law Maker." So, then, without moral agency, we cannot conceive of a moral government.

What is necessary, in order to constitute a moral agent, but the power to perform moral actions? An action is rendered moral by two circumstances—first, that it be voluntary; and secondly, that it have respect to some rule, which determines it to be good or evil. This lays a foundation for accountability, in the moral government of God relative to our race; without which, we cannot see how it could have been a moral government all.

Our first parents were constituted free agents, free in their very nature; and could not be otherwise accountable, as subjects of moral government, except as free agents. They were placed under law to God—a covenant of works—and as representatives of all their unborn progeny, were to determine by their conduct—their obedience or disobedience—the character of the whole race.

Secondly, he should show that they abused the ability and freedom given them, by sinning against their Maker; and that they with all their children became thereby guilty and depraved in the sight of God. They became not merely "mentally diseased, involving no guilt," nor

merely sinners by practice, and of course guilty, but innocent in nature." No! no! but, morally speaking, deranged in the head, diseased in the heart, and guilty before God. An error in the patient, as to the nature and extent of his disease, would lead to the application of inappropriate remedies; and so an erroneous estimate of the moral disorders of our natures must lead to wrong conceptions of the means of restoration. Therefore, when you discover light impressions of the nature and extent of man's depravity, you will find corresponding impressions concerning the Atonement of Christ—of the office and work of the Holy Spirit—of regeneration, and all the sacred cluster of doctrines which hang around the Cross. Hence the importance of driving the plow-share of God's word deep into the sinner's mind, tearing open and breaking up fully the fallow ground of his hard and corrupted heart, that he may see its pollution and deformity before God.

3. He should publish the law of God, and thunder forth its awful sanctions and endless penalties in the sinner's ears; and tell that, being a transgressor, he is under its curse; thereby showing him his utter inability to recover from his fall, by all his legal performances. "Now

we know that whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God; therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

4. He should hold up the precious cross of Christ in all its simplicity and excellency, and show that it is by virtue of the atonement alone that sinners of mankind have a free and full salvation offered to them. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Christ is just such a Saviour as poor lost sinners need; he is precisely suited to our condition as lost, guilty, and depraved. He waits to embrace returning prodigals, and with outstretched arms says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He will in no wise cast any off, because "He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." All are called to come, and pardon is provided for all. Christ Jesus "tasted death for every man," and now, if sinners are damned, it is their own fault, the Redeemer charges the

guilt upon their own souls: "Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life."

5. He should show that the only possible hope for justification is through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the deeds of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh living be justified." "Wherefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Christ is the foundation of our faith, and the anchor of our hope in God.

But lastly, he should preach all the doctrines of the gospel, and contend for every ordinance of our holy religion—"earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints."

Brethren, allow me to remark, in order to do this, it will not do to preach too often on one subject. I have known some, take what text they would, the congregation would invariably hear the same discourse, somewhat different in its verbage, perhaps, but substantially the same. When we address a number of discourses to a people, I think we should vary our subjects, so as to embrace all the doctrines of the gospel, so

far as we are able, and “give to saint and sinner their portion in due season;” otherwise we shall discharge only a part of our duty to their souls. The character of God, the Trinity and unity, the character of Christ as Mediator, the office and work of the Holy Ghost, the death of Christ, nature and extent of the atonement, repentance, faith, justification, regeneration, sanctification, and glorification, with the law, life, death, eternity, Heaven, hell, the resurrection, general judgment, and in all, faithfully enforcing practical duties and Gospel promises, should be the awful and solemn themes of a minister’s lips.

O, my brethren, who is sufficient for these things! Yet, you are ready to cry out, “Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel.” Well, as the vows of God are upon us, let us obey the Saviour’s charge, “Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature”—go publish salvation in my name to a ruined race of apostate men, to every one of Adam’s fallen family—tell them I have died, have tasted death for every man—tell them there is merit enough in my blood to wash away the foulest stains of sin, to purge from their corrupted hearts the last vestiges of depravity. Yes, tell them there is a fountain—bless God!—open in the house of

David for sin and uncleanness — that the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin. Go preach the Gospel to every creature. O precious Gospel, good news ! glad tidings of great joy to all people. I will bind thee to my bosom as my only treasure —

Then will I tell to sinners round
What a dear Saviour I have found;
I'll point to thy redeeming blood,
And say, Behold the way to God!

And now we come to the last part of our discourse, which was to speak of the most successful manner of discharging this most solemn trust.

Negatively speaking, a minister should not indulge in affectation in any thing, especially in regard to the modulation of his voice, gestures, or pronunciation. Much has been said on these points, and truly we believe them very important in order to success in preaching; because a dull monotonous tone of voice is very tiresome to an audience; instead of arousing attention, and animating the mind, it invariably stupifies, and renders a congregation sleepy. But at the same time, I think there is more danger in appearing to affect an unnatural tone of voice, by

studying the rules and restrictions of scholastic address, and carrying them with us into the pulpit, and applying them to the delivery of gospel truth, than there is in becoming too uniform and monotonous to arrest attention. I think the best way to reach the hearts of our hearers is to use our own gifts and common manner of address, as dictated by common sense and nature; because there appears to me to be a kind of identity in each man's own manner of address, which belongs to no other person's manner or mouth. Hence, the easy, natural manner, given us by the God of nature, will arrest attention, and seize upon the minds of an audience sooner than all the pompous tones of the stage.

This manner better becomes the minister of the Gospel than any other. There is no trick of the orator about it; and while the preacher pours forth the glorious truths and enlivening prospects and hopes of the gospel, in conversational simplicity, it is truth, pure truth—does the work, and frees the minds of sinners from the bondage of the devil, with all his lies. Some appear to rely more upon the play and flights of the imagination to convert souls, than even the pure unadulterated truths of the Bible themselves. There is great danger of this in time

of revival, when feeling runs high; hence we notice more spurious conversions on such occasions than in what is called a dull and lifeless season. When we hear of a conversion in such cold times, we are apt to conclude that such will be permanent and durable; the reason is obvious—simple truth has done the deed.

Again, in stating the subject matter of a discourse, we should not promise too much; and should be very careful, in advancing our arguments, not to be too positive, and not attempt to prove more by them than they will establish. We have noticed two evils result from inattention to this point. First, in our anxiety to convince, we are extremely apt to overstate the argument. We think no confidence with which we can speak of them too strong, when the intention is to urge them on our hearers. But this zeal more than otherwise defeats its own purpose. We are conscious of the exaggeration ourselves; our hearers perceive it, and this corrupts the influence of the whole conclusion—robs it of its true value, and either weakens or destroys its power on the congregation. In the second place, it undermines the solidity of proof so much that our own understandings refuse to rest upon them. This vitiates the integrity of

our judgments; it renders our minds somewhat incapable of estimating the proper strength of moral and religious argument; excites unreasonable suspicions of their truth, and renders one dull and insensible to their impression; because, though it may not be the same thing to over state a true reason as to advance a false one, yet to transgress the rules of fair argument, or to go beyond our own perception of the subject, is a similar, if not an equal fault in both cases—it is a want of candor, and that approaches very nearly to a want of veracity.

But positively, the minister should consider the condition and situation of his hearers, and try to apply his subject and manner of address to their peculiar cases; that is, to the particular state of thought and opinion which we perceive to prevail in our congregations. Dr. Paley remarks, in his charge to the clergy of the Diocese of Carlisle, “a careful attention to this subject is of the utmost importance; because, as it varies, the same sermon may do much good, none at all, or much harm.” Some appear to think that, provided they always keep within the lids of the Bible, or preach the truth, all is well; they are clear of the blood of souls. Suppose we do preach the truth, when that portion of

truth is not applicable to our hearers, and by a little attention the information necessary to the choice of an appropriate subject could have been obtained, are we not shamefully guilty of wasting our time and talents for nought, and of trespassing upon the time and best interests of our hearers. Negligence here may do much harm. Sinners will become Gospel hardened by hearing so much that does not suit their cases. In this way, the Gospel becomes an old song to many. Now there is a peculiar tender time and set of circumstances generally connected with every sinner's day of probation and moral career, which, if we could only ascertain, and touch the proper string, and hurl the dart of truth, we would be very apt to reach the heart. In order to this, however, you will readily discover that the minister should imitate the example of Christ, and mix among the scattered multitude, to learn human nature from real life, and not from books only; and especially cultivate an intimate acquaintance with his flock and congregation.

Secondly. He should speak with zeal and power—not with a frothy enthusiasm—but “with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven;” not to inspire a new Gospel, but to give energy

and zest to the one already recorded; to wield it as a two edged sword, piercing deep into the rebel sinner's heart. A minister unaffected with his own discourse, who talks along as though he did not believe what he was saying himself, need not expect to rouse up the slumbering minds of sinners, and break in upon their carnal security, so as to excite them to repentance and lead them to Christ. The preacher must feel himself, before his hearers can feel and sinners cry, "men and brethren, what must we do?" He must speak from the heart, if he would reach the heart.

Thirdly. Solemnity should appear in his whole manner of address. Salvation and damnation are solemn matters—heaven and hell are awfully important and fearful places—the soul of man is valuable far beyond computation. How then, when this soul, for which the Son of God groaned, and bled, and died, is in such imminent danger as it is of being lost, for ever lost—of missing heaven and going to hell—of losing salvation and being sent to damnation? How can the minister feel otherwise than solemn? Every word he utters has important bearing on the destiny of souls; every sermon he preaches is either a savour of life unto life, or of death

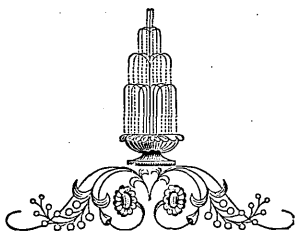
unto death; and his ministrations are peopling the fair climes of glory, or the infernal domains of Beelzebub. Oh, brethren, let us ask ourselves, are we doing good or harm?—Am I becoming an instrument in the Divine hand, of good to the Church and souls of men? or only paving the way for sinners to run more swiftly down to destruction! Brethren, I fear for some of us on this point. I feel solemn while I speak it. Oh, I tremble at the reflection, and with St. Paul say, “lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be cast away.” When the cap of hell shall burst off, and death and the grave deliver up their dead, and all men appear before God in judgment—Woe! woe! to the unfaithful minister! Let me turn away from his doom—my heart sickens and shudders at the thought.

Lastly. Every sermon should be delivered as if it were the last one he ever expected to preach, until called to give an account before God. We never know, when we are preaching to our fellow men, that we will live to address them again. Time is short—life is uncertain—and death is sure. Oh, how fast we are hurrying on to great eternity! Solemn reflection!—long, long eternity will soon, very soon contain

us all—heaven or hell will be the final homes of all men! Can a truly called minister of Christ duly feel the importance of these things, and not always preach as though every sermon was the last. Brethren, it cannot be long until we shall have preached our last time. If we shall have been honest and faithful in the discharge of the solemn trust committed to us, when we shall have finished our work, we shall be called from the walls of Zion, to lay down our Bibles, and go to take up harps of praise around the throne of God.

I had rather be a faithful minister of Jesus than to be a king or earthly monarch. God's own Son was a preacher, and now he is exalted to the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. So shall also the under Shepherds, before long, be led into green pastures, and beside the still waters of paradise above. O, how animating, to anticipate the close of our toils; when we shall meet some in heaven whom we have been the unworthy instruments of bringing to a knowledge and enjoyment of salvation on earth; and together shout, Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth! Go on, my brethren, and preach the Gospel. You have the Saviour's promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto

the end of the world." May the Lord crown your labors with great success. And to his name give all the glory.



SERMON II.

BY REV. LABAN JONES.

On Ministerial Support.

Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.—I CORINTHIANS, ix. 14.

We have never known an individual without some clever parts, or a system without some good features. In estimating any thing as a whole, we should carefully consider its weak and objectionable parts; reducing the better to an equality with these, and thus make an estimate of the value of the whole. A machine, for example, might have ten horse power at one part, and five at another, and then have a part which could not possibly bear more than one horse power. You all see that the great disproportionate capacity of the two first mentioned parts could be of no advantage to the machine. So in systems of government, morals, or divinity, parts supposed to be more objectionable than others should be scrutinously examined, and taken as a test of the soundness and utility of the sys-

tem as a whole. We doubt not, but in the apprehension of most persons, there are some doctrines or parts of the Bible supposed to be more vulnerable than others, and they are induced to defer their subscription to it as a whole, on account of these parts.

The Divine regulation concerning the support of the ministry constitutes one objectionable feature in Christianity with some. That the preacher should give himself entirely to study, to prayer, and to the ministry of the word, is looked upon as only a little better than loitering, by those indolent and uninformed persons who are almost strangers to the practice, and hence to the arduousness and importance of intellectual labor, or moral and religious instruction. With a mind in this condition, the minister labors under most serious disadvantages in delivering the very least objectionable parts of his message. Perhaps it would be the best for his cause and his deluded auditors, to suspend other labors for a season, and combat the unreasonable prejudices against the preacher's living by the Gospel. Just so long as the hearer can persuade himself that the preacher is actuated by sinister or lucrative motives, the door of his heart, and every possible avenue by which the preacher can ap-

proach him, is closed, so as to prevent the salutary effects from his labor which might otherwise be calculated on. This is one of the apologies for a special discourse on this subject. To break down this prejudice will be the removal of a serious obstacle in the way of the Gospel having an impartial hearing from the lips of its divinely appointed publishers.

The devil knows that ministers are very important instrumentalities in the depopulation of his empire and the conversion of the world to Christianity and virtue ; hence he invites and fosters feelings of this kind as a most effectual barrier to the truths of the gospel—for the production of which human depravity furnishes a congenial soil. When the motive of the minister is held thus under suspicion, every one knows the disadvantage with which he labors. The fact that anecdotes in which the ministers of the Cross are held up to derision, so universally find a welcome acceptance, and are made to contribute so largely to the mirth and hilarity of the reckless crowds, and often of those who claim to be and pass for gentlemen of accomplishments, goes far to show the strong propensity of human nature to profane and belittle the awfully responsible and important office of the ambassador of

Christ, that the matters of his embassy may be the less scrupulously regarded.

In establishing the order of human society, God has done all things well. The principle of mutual dependence and correspondent obligation is manifest throughout. "No man liveth to himself," or for himself; every one is made to live for his fellow; and in doing so, to subserve most highly his own and the general good. It is made the special duty of the preacher to "feed the flock of God," "to teach all nations," and to give his continual attention to the duties of his work, sowing spiritual things, to enlighten and improve society in all departments. Hence it is urged as no more than a reasonable return, that the minister should be furnished with carnal things by those for whose benefit he labors. If he be an ox and treads out the corn, surely he ought not to be muzzled while he toils; if he feed a flock, surely he should share of its milk; while he plants and cultivates a vineyard, it is certainly no trespass to eat of the fruit thereof; or if he go to warfare in the best of all causes, and endures the greatest fatigues and hardships, and fights the most important battles, gains valuable victories, and puts to flight, in his Master's strength, the armies of the alien foes, is it a great

thing for him to expect the beneficiaries of his toil to defray the needful charges. We have a reason for gratitude that there are no unreasonable duties imposed on any of us. The Lord always gives back, and helps to suit the burden to be borne. Every considerate one admits the importance and arduousness of a preacher's work; yet many stupid mortals will not allow study to be viewed as labor, especially in view of reward. Nine-tenths of the human race are so strangely inconsistent, that while most that they know, which gives them respectability, they have gathered from the teachings of the Gospel ministry, they denounce them as loiterers. For themselves, there is nothing to which they are more averse than study; they acknowledge its necessity for preachers, and think it very irksome to listen to one who is not well informed; yet they are very unwilling to allow him the means of seeking information. Such persons would perhaps be distressed to downright horror, if their living or estates were extended to them on condition that they study out of the Bible a sensible speech of eighty or ninety minutes long; and deliver one every week to a large mixed audience, some of whom were envious critics; and be bound most sacredly to vindicate the cause he

advocated with zeal and perseverance, all the time he enjoyed his living. Much as the dear man might love his land and property, in all probability he would soon relinquish the whole, rather than comply with the terms upon which he enjoyed it.

I tell you, hard study is a weariness of the flesh, and preachers, if they become any thing of workmen, must do much of it. Few people are content to have a pastor of mean attainments, and bunglers and botches they cannot abide. At the same time, they are very unwilling to afford their pastor leisure, which is absolutely essential to the acquisition of knowledge. This we think unreasonable, hence we invite a little plain reasoning together on this subject.

I. Let us consider the importance of the ministerial office, and something of its duties.

II. Show the reasonableness and the scriptural obligation to support the minister, and wherein it consists.

I. Every rival community must have advocates of its policy and institutions; much more must the kingdom of Jesus Christ, which has an opposition to encounter, ten thousand times more formidable than has ever been brought against any kingdom of this world. Such is the tenden-

cy of human things to degeneracy, that even in good things we are liable to relax and become criminally indifferent, unless we have line upon line, in the way of urgency and encouragement in duty. Moreover, the Gospel proposes not only to defend itself against the attacks of external foes, but to spread over all the earth, to fill the wide world with its glory; and that the kingdoms of this world—where hostility and most bitter enmity against God and his government had long reigned—are to become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ; and the very principles which were hated and opposed for ages, are to give tone to character, and to be the bond of fraternity to the most hostile people. The Cross of Christ is destined to push its signal and triumphant victories to every tongue, and kindred, and nation, and island, of the entire globe. In a work like this, we see the importance of policy and arrangement, on the part of the Church, that the armies of the living God be prepared for the struggle. The preacher is to be to the host of Israel what a leader and commander is to an army. We all see that an army, though enlisted under the banner of the Cross of Christ as their great Head and only wise Potentate and King, yet without subaltern offi-

cers, we could not reasonably expect that unity and concert of action necessary to success in combatting a proud and mighty foe. We are aware that there are proud and incorrigible spirits, who regard scarcely any thing mean but submission; and look with a most envious discontent upon all stations or offices in society of all kinds, whether of honor or profit, or mere respect and usefulness, which may be, or are considered to be, more elevated than theirs, although these high places may be as free and accessible to them as to any others, who may be no more qualified and eligible than they. "These despise government, presumptuous are they and self-willed; they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities."

While angels of real merit and superiority are represented as nobly modest in declining to accuse with severity their guilty inferiors—even Michael the Archangel was gentle and courteous in pronouncing the displeasure of God upon the devil himself—"these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things they understand not," and illiberal reflections and great swelling words of vanity they utter, promising others liberty, while they themselves are the servants of some occult and

unavowed corruptions. These are the standing opposers of system and policy in the operations of the Gospel. Wherever their influence prevails, anarchy and confusion of the worst sort is sure to result.

Admitting that the position of a preacher entitles its worthy incumbent to an amount of respect, and other attentions, which, carnally considered by a worldly mind, might be looked upon as distinctions pleasing to the flesh, yet that, to the sensible mind, will be no argument against the importance of the ministerial office. In all governments, if not actually, some must at least seem greater or more favored than the rest; when in fact the principles of the government may be based as much as possible on equal and mutual rights, with the great principles of justice and benevolence as strong and impregnable pillars thereof. Often one considers his fellow's position much more desirable than his own, until he tries it, when, to his utter astonishment, he finds it one of most fearful responsibility and harrassing care. It is an object of the severest contempt to hear men talk of preachers living an easy life: nothing, say they, but read, study, teach, and preach, and speak of it all as light and easy; and these very persons, no doubt,

were they required to perform said duties, would very soon beg to exchange burdens with the farmer or mechanic.

After the entire catalogue of objections to the privileges and easy lives of the preachers—unjust and illiberal as they are—when people only consider the happy effects of their labors on the morals and useful institutions of the country, and they are like to be deprived of these invaluable blessings by the trespasses of a ruthless invading foe; when internal broils or withering corruptions disturb the public weal, or when efforts of an intellectual as well as benevolent character are imperiously called for—with one consent the preacher is called to the rescue of his suffering country. Not to appear with becoming promptness, would be loudly denounced; all would see the importance of his services. If the friends of order and religion need to be encouraged, and efficiently marshaled for a profitable attack on sin and the powers of darkness, a most important and laborious part of the whole devolves on the preacher. He is a commander of the people of God in their efforts to subdue and reclaim the enemies of truth and holiness. When we contemplate the number and formidableness of the foes, we can but see the impor-

tance of having the host of Israel arranged and disciplined after the best possible manner, and conducted to the contest with the greatest skill and judgment.

In drawing a list of the enemies of God's people, we cannot promise to be full and complete. The world, as a great leading adversary, we apprehend as most dangerous and deadly, but all its various concomitant and satellite forces, we cannot minutely arrange. The flesh we name, but it would take a book to catalogue its vile affections, evil tempers, corrupt principles, degrading lusts, and countless kinds of wicked and unholy passions, entirely too tedious to mention. The devil also, with his black and rampant legions, raging and foaming with fiery wrath, like the clashing billows of the angry deep. Bear in mind, too, that the opposition is leagued and trained, and exercises a most insidious vigilance, calculated to shame the advocates of a better cause. To meet and repel such invincible antagonists, could not be calculated on by any other than a disciplined and well conducted host, let its natural courage and intrepidity be what it may.

Seeing, therefore, that atheists, deists, and all manner of skeptical heresies—many claiming to

be the purest deductions from the Holy Scriptures—are urging, with the boldest authority, the high sanctions of Heaven in their support, these cannot be met without a ministry who have time and leisure for mental culture, that they may be thoroughly furnished with the whole armor of God, and a panoply of knowledge. For such a work, the judgment must be enlightened, as well as the heart sanctified, and then, in the strength of the Lord, the attention must be untiringly zealous in order to success. The importance of a ministry competent to a just division of the word, to defend the honor of God, and the claims of his Gospel, to reason with some skill, and contend earnestly and ably for the faith once delivered to the saints, will be acknowledged by all. Are there not thousands who will have the candor to confess their indebtedness to this instrumentality for the maintenance of public morals, and most other things that render christendom desirable as a country, and that raises it in value above the other territories of the earth, which are—as regards climate, soil, and indeed all other advantages, except only such as the Gospel and its influences, in all its ten thousand ways, effects the interests of a country and its inhabitants—quite

equal to the country which the Christians inhabit, yet, on the whole, almost infinitely less desirable as a residence for tasty and intelligent persons, than the most unsightly regions of the Christian lands.

To notice the very many respects in which the introduction of the Gospel into a country, improves, and adds to the general weal, prosperity, virtue, and happiness of it, would be a large work. For all that amount we are indebted to the persecuted and despised instrumentalities, for whose divine authority and usefulness we plead. After all that can be said in favor of other means, it must be acknowledged, that it has pleased God, through the foolishness of preaching—as the world esteems it—to save them that believe, and to confer on them more excellent improvements through this means than any other. Through this medium the violated law proclaims its awful denunciations, and claims the punishment due for its wanton desecrations. In it the world is furnished with a criterion to govern its actions, and with a most powerful motive to deter from vice, and to engage self-denyingly and promptly in the practice of virtue. Here we learn the real heinousness of sin, and the degraded condition of the world on account

of it; and through this same channel of communication, we are favored with the glad tidings of salvation, through the merits of a Saviour's precious blood; — the pleasing story of the cross, with its light, life, power, and all its ennobling and purifying energies, which, age after age, has been, to humble believers, the power of God unto salvation, as well from the love and reigning power, as from the guilt and impurity of sin. By the same we are taught repentance towards God, faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, and all the means needful to get possession of an interest in the merits of the great atonement, and the entire saving power of the precious Gospel. By all these operations, the powers of darkness are discomfited, and every thing which opposeth the dominion of Christ has hitherto been repulsed; and great as has been the hindrances, the progress of his persecuted cause has still been onward.

We argue the importance of the Gospel ministry from the fact, that the Lord has appointed it. None will question the infinite wisdom and goodness of God, to appoint and enact, both in the church and in the whole universe, what shall be most for general good. Paul says he was ordained and appointed a preacher and teacher

in faith and verity. The Apostles and their associates in labor were appointed by the Saviour. If it was once proper that God should exercise the prerogative of appointing the ministers of the cross, if the office be still maintained by Divine authority, which all admit, is it not a vile trespass upon the Divine prerogative, for others to assume the appointment of the incumbent. The fact that Christ is not visibly present, as in the days of the flesh, is no objection to the theory we maintain, because he does other things now, by his Spirit, his word, his providence, and his ministers and church, which, in the days of his flesh, he did visibly and in person: reproving the world of sin, expostulating with, and entreating sinners to repent, teaching and comforting his beloved disciples; a care which he delights to attend, and feels no less anxious for them now, than in the days of his incarnation. When he commanded his disciples to go and teach all nations, he promised to be with them always, even unto the end of the world; the fulfillment of which promise no one doubts, yet none expects the visible presence of Christ in doing it. Does he not chasten, sanctify, and comfort his people still? And if they have a heart felt sense of his comforts, may they not of his calls? Do not

his people pray to him, and obtain answers in the revival of his work in the earth, in the destruction of the powers of darkness; and in the upbuilding of his glorious kingdom in the earth? It will surely not be denied that he has access to, and communion with the members, to direct and govern them according to his good pleasure, maintaining the distinct impression of his own absolute and perfect sovereignty over his church and creatures, and of their complete subordination.

It is certainly a gross misapprehension of the nature and character of God, and of his relation to his believing people, or to the creatures he has made, to hold that the Divine control over them is rendered any less practicable on account of his ascension to heaven, or that his divine oversight of them is any less, now he has ascended to glory, than when he sojourned here below. What he has been to his church in other ages, he surely is still: her Head, Husband, Teacher, Surety, Refuge, Physician, Potentate, Leader, Law Giver, Guide, Counsellor, and Almighty Prince. So that what once he did for his people, if it be important to be done, and so perfectly compatible with his relation to them to do, we see nothing to prevent, and every reason

why he should still be expected to perform the same, especially in a matter so prominent as the selection of ambassadors to stand in his stead, to negotiate about reconciliation with a world of offending rebels.

If there is a prerogative of Christ's throne, the inviolate reservation of which would be conducive to his glory and sovereignty over his creatures, there is certainly none which would seem more so than the calling and sending his ministers on the weighty embassy with which the preacher of the gospel is entrusted; the further consideration of his reserving this right being so entirely coincident with his unrestricted dominion and independent sovereignty over his works. And moreover, as we have no account of this power being conferred upon the church, or any judicatory of it, and as it is uncontested that the Head of the church did once exercise it, we conclude it remains with him still, and that no church has a right to give letters of authority, neither has any member a right to claim them, only such as in a judgment of charity have been called of God, as was Aaron; they being in the communion of the church, and having given proof of their piety and capacity, professing to feel that they were inwardly impressed

by the Holy Spirit to this awfully great and glorious work, with which, when slightly considered, no earthly occupation will bear any comparison in point of importance and weight of responsibility.

We further observe, that the importance of having preachers, will appear from the fact, that the Lord always has had them in his church, in all ages and dispensations. That which was originally instituted by almighty God, and kept up through the whole period of time chronicled by the sacred writers, and to which all refer as the means of signal blessings to men, we conclude is still the object of Divine approbation. Among men, almost the only sure and infallible test of the usefulness and expediency of any regulation, is by the trial of it. The relation between preacher and people will not be denied to be of ancient date; that the church, upon whom, it is contended by the opposers of it, the burden of the regulation rests, are pleased with it, and have realized profit from it, has rarely been contested; while it is universally acknowledged, that to the wicked world it has been a source of invaluable advantage. It is every where agreed, that the unlearned and incorrigible need to be led and instructed; the only point

at issue among men on this subject, relates to the order of the thing—whether any person who sees proper to go, or a church sees proper to send, or whether men were sent of God, and they only to speak as having authority and to be heard as the messengers of the Almighty.

We do not propose at this time a formal argument on the question of the call of God to the work of the holy ministry; a few remarks shall suffice at present. The fact, that throughout the whole Bible its readers cannot fail to be so perfectly familiar with the idea of God sending angels and men on errands of mercy—His sending the ancient Patriarch and holy Prophets, all of whom most evidently regarded it as a desideratum in their embassy, and positively indispensable to their success, however well they might be otherwise furnished. Even Solomon, with all his wisdom, would no doubt have felt unprepared, and every way disqualified for the great work which he presided over, but for the clear and intelligent intimations of its being the special appointment of Providence. So he, as did the holy Prophets of God in former ages, looked to God for direction and special blessings upon them and their labors. But if men go of their own accord, it does not appear so probable

that they will look to God and implore divine aid with the confidence of one who felt that he could not preach except he be sent, and who, with a deep and trembling sense of his own entire insufficiency, was sent by the Lord; and, in view of his timidity, seeing the greatness of the work, is encouraged by the Divine promise: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." So if the principal agency in sending be the church, who may take the responsibility, either through ignorance or arrogance, as we fear the church of Rome did, in assuming paramount control over the earth, infallibility in her decisions, power to change the substance of the elements in the holy sacrament, with many other things in which we can but regard her as very arrogantly, and to our view most sacrilegiously, claiming privileges which evidently constitute a part of the Divine prerogative. Such daring trespasses upon the honor of the Divine throne, may be often repeated, and the vile perpetrator extensively flattered by a large and lordly circle of courtiers, no less vile, until he be so swollen with vanity and vile presumption as to think himself equal with God, and put himself in the place of God. So may associations, called Churches, claim and exercise powers not delegated to them,

making one encroachment after another, until they cease to be Churches of God, and become the very Synagogues of Satan. At what particular period their characters may change, it may be very difficult to determine. At first they may be all iron; in the course of inscrutable events, a little clay may appear; then it may be part iron and part clay, through a long series of years, until at length the clay predominates, and at last entirely prevails. Degeneracy of associations is not instantaneous, but gradual, though the various inducing causes may happen at different instances—as the leaven may at one time be put into a measure of meal, but the dissemination of its properties to every part is the work of time. Hence, the very slightest errors, either in principle or practice, ought to be checked in the bud. Where Churches err, the responsibility is so easily shifted, as often to have the guilt so obscured that no one feels conviction for it—because corporate bodies have no souls to think or repent. Hence no one is concerned about the remedy, and here the old proverb is most unhappily felt, that what is every body's business is nobody's; thus the evil passes from generation to generation.

We often meet with persons who tell us they

do not like some specified usage of their Church; yet, because it is a rule of the Church, they conclude to observe it, and vindicate it; though they confess it is not consistent with the holy Scriptures. So people maintain doctrines merely because they are the doctrines of their Church; not only without any foundation, but evidently contrary to the Bible.

In assuming the responsibility of designating who shall preach, the Church would act very much the part of a woman who would take the power out of the hands of her husband, to wield the family scepter, and to assume the authority to make laws for and control the labors of the household. From this cause, some denominations have something of the sickly aspect of families under feminine government. The proper part for the Church to act is to come up to the help of the Lord, her Husband, and to be to him a dutiful help-mate. Where the Church, like a woman, attempts to do the work of her Husband, she is very certain to neglect her own.

The ministry that God appoints we may expect will profit the people. Not that they will always be admired or beloved by them; for it is far from being true that fame and usefulness are always united. Often the men who have been

truly the beloved and approved prophets of God have been despised and rejected of men. Only one out of about four hundred prophets in the days of Ahab was hated, imprisoned, abused, and fed on the bread and water of affliction; and he only prophesied the truth. All the rest, though popular, and flattered by the world, were false and deceitful in their pretensions. A most awakening fact for poor ministers to contemplate, in every age. Perhaps no class of men are more liable to be deceived in themselves. Our very employment, with all the means of knowledge afforded us therein, is calculated, nevertheless, to beguile us into a confidence that all is well. Because external improprieties are so much more positively incompatible with our professions than others, we have motives aside from the fear of God to excite us to avoid them; hence while others approve us, we are liable to overlook ourselves. Preachers are truly men of like passions with others, in being much more easily induced to a good than a bad opinion of themselves. We regret that the above is not the only manifestation of such great blindness and degradation of the clerical class of men, in the days of Elijah, of Isaiah, of Jeremiah, who wept, on this account, the bitterest tears,

and lamented and bewailed the condition of the Lord's prophets with a tenderness of sympathy utterly unearthly in its melting tones. Thank God, there were many intervening periods of great prosperity and joy to the people of God; but at the birth of our Saviour, when he came to his own, his own rejected him. As late as the days of the noble Luther, and his illustrious companions in suffering and toil, it was most mournfully true, that while there were only a few weeping ones who cared for the flock, there were thousands who went for the fleece. Yet through all the vicissitudes of the visible church, the Lord has had a precious seed who never bowed the knee to Baal, but lived and died in the true faith, and by it overcome the world, and have ascended to glory. So amidst the great numbers of false and deceitful Prophets, the good Lord has always had his faithful few—some perhaps in most denominations—who have been valiant for the truth, have sought more to please God than men. These have generally suffered scandal and reproach—often despised and persecuted by men, through whose indefatigable labors the Lord designs, at no distant period, more happy and prosperous days for our

beloved Zion, when the ministry shall be more sanctified, and its labors more blessed.

That no church or community has ever prospered greatly without a preacher, is written in her history for ages past; many have tried it, but truly it has been in vain. In passing through life we have made this observation, that where the Gospel is faithfully preached, and its ministers well supported, God in his kind providence does not fail to pour out in copious effusion the blessings of his bounty and grace to that people. On the other hand, they who have meagerly sustained their ministers, have themselves had hard times in some way. The Lord has given special promises to his ministers to sustain them in their arduous work. for the welfare of such as are truly devoted, he does evidently express a special care—a motive highly calculated to inspire sentiments of noble, spiritual and heavenly bearing in the earth, and to reconcile us to every privation and hardship to which we may be exposed. For it is by no means irreconcilable with the profoundest solicitude for their comfort, on the part of God, that sufferings and afflictions should be permitted to befall them, and sore chastisements be visited upon them; yet in it all, they are enabled to deduce the

sweetest consolation from the truth that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose,"—Rom. viii. 28; which purpose we understand to be expressed in the Gospel, to be conformed to its calls and invitations; therefore we conceive it to be that accordance with the Divine pleasure which brings us within the purview of this gracious provision. We express the universal sentiment of the wise and good, when we say, that there is no earthly instrumentality by which the church or the world has been so much blessed, and their greatest good more effectually advanced, than by the Gospel ministry. Bad as the ministry have been, the laity have always been as bad, and more degraded, because they have been not only equally corrupt, but much more blinded. The maxim, however trite, still retains its reputation for correctness, "like priest, like people." Believing that piety always makes its appearance in the earth first among the few, and then becomes matter of dissemination, it will scarcely be denied, that that few have been the teachers of righteousness which in every age have been appointed and recognized by the Almighty as the heralds of his grace and the living publishers of his

sovereign will to the children of men. They have always been very prominently known as the men of prayer, self-denial, and suffering for righteousness' sake. When schemes of benevolence have been projected, who have been their liberal patrons and fast friends more than the ministry? Who have spent more wearisome study, more time, more talents, more labor, or more money, according to their possessions, than the ministers of the Most High, in all the efforts which have been and which still are making, to enlighten, to sanctify, or in any other way to ameliorate the degraded and miserable condition of guilty sinners, either in our own country or in foreign lands? In all these respects the minister necessarily imparts his spirit as well as his habits to the people with whom he mingles. Under the same operation of mental law, by which evil communications corrupt good manners, pious and benevolent intercourse and manifestation exert a sublimating and heavenly influence on those who are exercised under them. The preacher is profitable to the people, and is the instrument in contributing to their prosperity in many ways; the gross darkness that covers the mind is to be dissipated very much through the means of this operation. That portion of

men who become enlightened in other ways is small indeed, compared with the crowds which are taught in this way. We can contemplate hundreds and even thousands of minds giving attention to the same sermon or lecture, and an influence both illuminating and sanctifying exerted on every one at the same time, just as efficiently and perhaps more so than if the same labor was spent in the instruction of one individual; and the probability of being benefited is much greater than for each one personally to read the discourse.

To have a community enlightened, all acknowledge, as well as the importance of teaching, in order to it; yet it is very difficult to get men to engage in it. Most of the toil of it, so far as moral illumination is concerned, devolves upon the preacher, without which other intelligence will be ultimately to little purpose. He is to teach all nations—his work is never completed while there remains a human being without a knowledge of the truth.

Another important part of his work is to engage in reclaiming the wandering prodigals from their sinful ways. Think of all the depravity and corruption which degrade and degenerate fallen men, and here you have a view of another

part of the preacher's work. Oh, what a work! to purify the foul sinks of human society, and render the most profligate and abandoned orderly and useful. To notice in detail the reformation proposed by this instrumentality would be too extended a protraction of our present discourse.

The work of a preacher is one of immense labor, both of body and mind. There is little or no labor more trying on the constitution than much public speaking. The preacher can endure almost any hardships and physical exertion who can endure the labor of a missionary on the frontier districts of the United States, where alternate cold and heat contract and relax the system; to climb the hills and range the valleys, face the storms, and endure the pelting rain and hail; preaching night and day, one day in an open cold house, the next in one close to almost suffocation; sometimes lodged in a princely palace, with a superabundance of earthly comforts, anon, in the poorest hovel, being obliged, as much as possible, to accommodate himself to all sorts of people and circumstances. A detailed account of their privations, perils, exposures, high waters, bad roads, and no roads, inhospitalities, and vile persecutions, journeyings, fatigue,

hunger and thirst, and sometimes nakedness and want, would be truly appalling to a sympathetic mind, living in the enjoyment of the comforts of life. Besides all this a hundred times told, the mental anxieties are incalculably more harrassing than the bodily deprivations; the care of the Churches, pious solicitude about what to preach, and how to preach, so as to do good and not harm, commending the preceious Gospel to every man's conscience in an effectual manner, that his ministry may savor unto life and not unto death, and sinners through it be brought to know and love God, and be fitted for the society of the better world.

Some men affect to preach without much study or preparation. We have known a few men who would take much pains to make the impression that they were purely extemporaneous; and divinely directed, (if not inspired,) and ridicule the idea of special preparation on special subjects; often mentioning that they incidentally opened to a passage, on which they propose a discourse, and then denounce learning and study, and a ministry who live by the gospel, and publish their opposition to the benevolent efforts of the church, (all of which generally go together,) as a kind of introduction. As for the sermon,

let the text be in Genesis or Revelation, it has the same three hydra heads, with but little variation, wherever it may be heard. And as to the text, it makes but little difference what it is, or where it is, the sermon is substantially the same. Whatever claims such persons may otherwise have upon public confidence, surely they cannot be envied their claims for candor or consistency. Such do not fail to proclaim the meagerness of their conceptions of the proper work of a Christian minister. Surely such have never considered the wants of the church or the world; nor the weighty responsibility resting on the poor preacher, both to his Creator and to these, to have the honor of God and his institutions ably defended and enforced; to have the suffering church comforted, purified, increased, trained, and protected; to have the world instructed, and reprov'd of sin, of righteousness, and of a judgment to come, preaching Jesus, and warning and teaching every man in all wisdom, and gentleness, and truth, that every man may be fairly presented before the judgment seat of Christ, that good order and morality may be promoted in the earth, that vice, in all its ten thousand inscrutable forms, be ferretted out and suitably exposed and decried, and public attention, if possible,

awakened and kept alive to religion and its claims. In all which, although the minister may exhaust all his resources, and wear out his lungs and his life, he will have done well, if his entire time be spent in a way that the ministry be not blamed, and prove himself a minister of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, &c.; by pureness, by knowledge, by long suffering, &c.; as poor, yet making many rich, &c. 2 Corinthians vi. 40.

The influence of a preacher's labors is designed and calculated to distil and foster, in those who are the beneficiaries of them, such principles and habits as cannot fail to secure wealth, prosperity, and respectability, if no more. These are among the small advantages; its more ample developments may, to be sure, bring outward distress and persecution, yet the hopes and prospects it inspires will much more than make amends. It does not require a course of reasoning to show how the preacher enriches others, while he—unless properly sustained by them—waxes poor thereby. They are taught by him, and at his expense, to be humble, frugal, temperate, patient, vigilant, prayerful, economical, enterprising, industrious, prudent, good, punctual, fervent in spirit, and not slothful in business;

also, to be charitable and given to hospitality. This last one thing being neglected, though some of the others may, riches will accumulate, and that no doubt to the injury of the professor, because wealth képt will canker. Man was never designed for a depository of wealth, but to be always active in both getting and giving. To be always getting, as we ought to, and never to give, would, instead of making us useful, make us the greatest curses to society.

It is to Christianity that Temperance, Sunday Schools, and all other benevolent societies, are indebted for their secret springs of action and usefulness. And the impulses given by it to general enterprise and benevolence, is another way of imparting good to a people, and advancing their temporal in connection with their moral and spiritual interests. As our religion extends the promise of the life that now is, as well as that which is to come, and the minister being the instrument of introducing Christianity, a most blessed system of both internal and external, as well as moral and physical improvement, among a people, is very properly said to enrich them; and yet there is, perhaps, no set of men who share more sparingly, either of public munificence or gratitude. Strange that the same

community of such as pass for intelligent men, should at one moment denounce the clergy as unworthy spungers upon a country's kindness, and in the next acknowledge them as the greatest contributors to general intelligence, and as the almost entire conservators of public virtue.

Just so long as it is true that a country's wealth consists mainly in the knowledge and virtue of its inhabitants, so long it will be equally true, that the gospel minister, by his privations and toil, will be an eminent instrument in subserving the public weal in the hands of Him who was infinitely and independently "rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich." And in all the various ways that the introduction of the religion of Christ into a country is acknowledged to add to its value, or enhance its intrinsic desirableness in any respect, in comparison with other regions, or just what Christianity imparts to a territory, which it could not have without it, is the proper amount of additional worth given through the instrumentality of the heralds of the gospel; for which there should be as properly awarded to them, medals of respect, as to the military chieftains for their valiant exploits and noble achievements.

We have been rather lengthy in our first part, with a view of being thereby the more cheerfully justified at the bar of the consciences of our auditors, when we urge the obligations we propose to notice in the second place, which are,

II. To show the reasonableness, and the Scriptural obligations to support the minister, and wherein they consist.

There is an ancient and deeply rooted prejudice in many minds against the practice of paying preachers, and also against the preacher who lives by the gospel, (or by preaching it,) as others live by farming, or any other occupation. These fastidious souls have a special dislike to the stipulation of annual salaries for preachers; and what I am almost ashamed to tell, is, that many poor, injudicious preachers will sometimes endorse such stuff one day, and the next, in a different crowd of folks, will be as loud and plaintive in their murmurs, at feeling it their duty to preach so much, and have so little done for them, to defray their charges and furnish them for their work. Now here is a question for you to figure over: Which of these two classes deserves the least respect from those who know and love the truth? One is founded in stinginess, the other in the most effeminate ir-

resolution and wanton disregard of propriety. These, though they will not be our only competitors in this department of our subject, being very prominent ones, may be noticed again as we proceed.

A mere war about words has always been to no profit. Some preachers will receive any thing that may be offered them, yet object to the practice of having stated wages, and have so singular a delicacy as to become offended with their brethren who talk about pay for preaching. Such might be offended with their Saviour, who said: "The laborer is worthy of his hire;" "The workman is worthy of his meat," Mat. x. 10; and "The laborer is worthy of his reward," 1 Tim. v. 18. Paul says he took wages from one church to preach to another; a less informed or less liberal one, we presume; 2 Cor. xi. 8. Thus, while the Saviour and his inspired Apostle speaks so familiarly of wages, of hire, and of reward, for labor in word and doctrine, they evidently mean nothing other than preaching the Gospel, and receiving a partial compensation in carnal things; not altogether spiritual benefits, as some, with much affected devotion, would pretend to argue.

All insist that it is a very imperious duty of

the preacher to "preach the word, be instant in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine, for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things: endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." 2 Tim. iv. 2-5. To be faithful to a people in all these duties, doubtless makes a preacher among the great gifts of heaven to men. Be prompt and fearless in exposing the vices of the world, in showing to the house of Israel their transgressions, and to God's people their sins, in encouraging the timid and modest Christian, and in opposing the incorrigible sinners in their vicious courses.

To engage in this most important work as one should, requires not only a considerable measure of scientific and theological information and piety, but demands the consecration, most unreservedly, of his entire energies, time and talents. Hence, we think it should not be considered unreasonable that the minister be well sustained in all necessary carnal things. "If we

have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things." 1 Cor. ix. 11. It surely will be looked upon as a very illiberal thing that a preacher should be complained of because he allows that Churches ought to have regularity in their doings; to have their stated minister, and give him a stipulated support, with which he may be satisfied; and the Church cheerful in giving, else there could not be expected that cordiality and harmony, that affectionate confiding feeling among brethren, so very needful to make their communion sweet and their co-operations efficient. That the preacher should be expected to give his whole attention to the work of the ministry, and engage in no other avocation for a livelihood, and then be held censurable for any expressions of dissatisfaction with his brethren, who may continually neglect to contribute to his secular necessities, we think very unreasonable and unkind. To have a preacher depend, for a support, upon mere incidental favors, which he may be considered unentitled to claim or even calculate on, is certainly very bad policy, and very incompatible with that spirit of Christian liberality and manly bearing that should always characterize the ambassador of God. In this way the sacred

office is often brought into contempt and ridicule, and with it the good cause is made to suffer. A preacher is often looked upon as a mere beneficiary of the alms of the liberal, a spunger on the community at large, waiting, and watching, and hunting round for favors, as rather a kind of God send to a poor beggar. And then he is held bound to as many thanks for gratuities done him, as though he had really received something for nothing, and the obligation supposed to be created on the receiver, in favor of the giver, more perhaps than forty such presents are worth. For instance, a miserly professor will give a preacher a dollar—for such wonders do happen—and hence conclude that he should preach two or three sermons for his or his family's accommodation on account of it; then wink at his imperfections, defend his perhaps tottering reputation, and do many other things into the bargain.

Some argue that the ordinary hospitalities extended to preachers should be enough to create such an obligation. Others, still less, allow that it is not less the duty of the minister to attend and preach, and not much more trouble than for them to attend and hear. Such cannot see the propriety of him who preaches the Gospel living by it. It is most ridiculous to consider how

people estimate a preacher's labor; some count up the time spent in actual preaching on week days—asserting it to be actual Sabbath breaking to count a minister's Sabbath labors any consideration for a support—then throw it into an aggregate of days or months, and allow a small per cent. over the wages of common mechanics, which is thought to be liberal. Such persons never think of the time necessarily spent by preachers, in seeking qualifications for their work; and of the constant mental labor indispensable to its prosecution. The work of a minister requires no less of natural talent, of scientific attainment, of physical ability, industry, and good useful habits, than is required to fit one for the more lucrative professions.

When men are cheerfully rewarded, according to a correct mode of estimating intellectual labor, if one spends a week in hard study, to prepare himself on an important subject, so as to present it lucidly and forcibly in one hour on Sabbath, much to the edification and profit of a numerous assembly, ought he to be paid for an hour or a week's work? If the ox that treadeth the corn is not fed, he can labor but little, and to but little purpose. The same is no less true of preachers; unless the Church sustain them in

their secular wants, so as to afford them time to study, and thereby strengthen their minds, they cannot be expected to labor regularly and efficiently in the Gospel vineyard. That some men have been very useful, who have been very scantily supported, will not be denied; neither should it be denied that they might have been much more so, had they been properly supported.

Paul preached to one Church without being chargeable to them; but he was supported by more liberal brethren at another place. Just so, many preachers live on what their friends afford them, and preach to others; but in all cases it is on account of the weakness of the persons labored with, who were not yet fully acquiescent in all the rules of the Gospel; and it was some times done not to their credit, by any means. Paul, it is urged was a tent maker, and wrought with his own hands. So he did; and so, we doubt not, would every true minister of Jesus, under similar circumstances. But no one will pretend that Paul ever taught it should be a standing regulation in the Church of Christ.

We trust that every called minister feels that a support from the Church is not the condition of his preaching, but that, as far as in him lies,

he will preach the Gospel to evrey creature, pay or no pay ; yet he will make it a part of his teaching every where, that the Churches should support their ministers. This we understand to be substantially the course of the apostle Paul, when placed in circumstances that it was needful to work with his hands for a support, he would cheerfully do it ; and when he could receive aid from the brethren, either where he labored, or elsewhere, he did so, and was thankful to them for doing what it was no more than their duty to do, and what it was his privilege to receive.

“Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul, Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own, Paul should himself direct me ; I would trace His master strokes, and draw from his design.”

COWPER.

In doing so, I might trace many a successful and flaming herald of the Cross from the plow, the plane, the trowel, the anvil, the tent factory, as well as from the counter, the mortar, the bar, and almost every avocation of men. But I would not advise them to pursue these avocations as a regular calling, for a livelihood, after their consecration to the ministry, however ready they might be to resort to them in cases of emergen-

cy. Almost with one consent men generally will object to the idea of any one, but especially of a preacher, being, as the old proverb has it, "Jack at all trades;" lest he thereby so dissipate his energies, invite responsibilities, crowd too many irons into the fire, let most of them burn, and he prove good at none. We have known many who aimed to be their own carpenters, coopers, cobblers, blacksmiths, farmers, &c. and we have generally found time enough consumed at every job to have hired it well done, by appropriating the time properly to either of the trades. It being the evident design of Heaven that no man should live to himself, but that all should live as brethren, and be mutually dependent on each other. No one man, however talented, is endowed with a capacity equally adequate to every business. Some men are, manifestly, by their natural genius and caste of intellect, peculiarly adapted to some occupations, for which, by nature, others have comparatively no fitness. This plainly indicates what the Scriptures most clearly teach, that God intended men to follow different occupations — the business of the preacher being at an early period made the special labor of a designated class of men. Now, if God has created the office of preacher, and he appoints

the man to fill it, prescribing such duties as imperiously require the incumbent to give his whole time to the work, with the most awfully solemn charges to be punctual and faithful to his post and its duties, may we not reasonably conclude, with the teaching of the Scripture, that God has made provision whereby his ministers shall live by the Gospel, and not be considered oppressors on that account?

Perhaps about as difficult a part of our subject as any, will be to settle what should be considered competent for a minister's living. Here there are many circumstance to be taken into consideration. There are various ways to live and various kinds of livings; so there are different positions to occupy; there are also a great variety of talent, qualifications and wants in the ministry; so that almost any place can have its own minister and support him. That some preachers are actually worth more than others, should no more be controverted, than that some doctors, lawyers, mechanics, or laborers are. There are parts of the great work which it would be very injudicious for some workmen to attempt, who might be more useful at another department of the field than he who could work to profit at this point. It is extreme-

ly desirable and important for each man to know and be anxious to work at the place he is fitted for. At some parts of the field it is more difficult to support a laborer than at others; hence a specified amount for each man who labors could not be equal in its bearings. The entire circumstances of the laborer himself, his condition, the point to be occupied, and all should be considered, and then what might be regarded a comfortable living for an economical family, should be cheerfully allowed to the preacher—not as a charity, but as a just and reasonable reward for his labor. We do not think that preachers should be furnished equal to those in the most affluent circles, neither do we think it proper to reduce them to the humblest ranks and the leanest livings; but let them be placed in this respect about in mediocrity, so as to rank with common good farmers and mechanics, and be about equi-distant between the poor and the rich—having easy access and correspondence with each class, and himself be a kind of bond of union between the two, belonging to neither but to both.

If men of the world, who serve as doctors, lawyers, or tradesmen, deserve a reward suitable to their skill and the importance of the service done us—though the time engaged be very short

—do not preachers, whose work requires no less qualifications, deserve to be compensated for their arduous labor. Do n't make your preacher feel like a beggar, or that he is dependent on charity, and has no right to expect a living as his due for his services; but let the understanding be that he has as just a claim on those for whom he preaches, as though he had wrought for them at any other employment.

As liberality is a Christian grace, should not the minister have it in his power to exercise it as well as others? but how can he if he be denied by the duties of his calling the opportunity of a lucrative business, and those to whom he preaches neglect to supply him. As there are few more worthy motives to prompt to honorable emulation than a desire to be a liberal giver, and as the grace of liberality with its associate concomitants of Christian character can only increase by exercise, could we not practice the principle with propriety and safety in extending bountifully of our carnal things to him, who so freely supplies us with such an abundance of spiritual things, and through the medium of whose services to us have been opened the richest springs of comfort and heavenly expectation. May we not assume, that with all the imperfec-

tions, and base corruptions which sometimes occur even among the professed ministers of the Gospel, still there is not to be found another class of men more worthy of a liberal support, and on whom the bounty of those to whom they minister could be more properly bestowed. To the discretion of such men we might safely confide the judicious appropriation of worldly wealth so as to make it most highly contributory to the best interests of piety and benevolence. Liberality is a noble quality. The Lord would stimulate men to the practice of it, by encouragements to cast our bread upon the water with the promise that we should gather it after many days, assuring us that he loves a cheerful giver and that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

It is disgusting to be familiar with the manner in which some people make up their estimates of the amount needful to support a preacher. They put down a reasonable allowance of salt, leather, meat, meal, a few groceries and other little articles, taking nothing into the calculation for his or his family's clothing, education, books, stationery, charitable contributions, traveling and contingent expenses, and such prominent articles of outlay as must occur in every or-

dinary family. In matters of this kind obligations are not imposed like taxes, but are voluntarily assumed, affording a fine opportunity for the exercise of benevolence, a very prominent principle in our holy religion, the practice of which constitutes much of the felicity of human life. In it we make the brightest developments of the life and power of our precious Christianity, and imitate the conduct of Christ and his most exemplary followers. Giving with judgment and discretion to an object of this kind, especially as we have a divine warrant for the appropriation, may be regarded as laying up treasures in heaven, and perhaps doing much better for ourselves and families with our means, than to vest them in the most productive bank stocks in the earth. You will not understand us as advising you to make your preachers rich, so far from it we deprecate that condition, and think it much less compatible with the usefulness of the minister than poverty itself. Our idea here, as in many other things, is a medium position of neither poverty nor riches—not poor lest he be mean and condescend to unbecoming sources to gain a livelihood; nor rich lest he get full and deny the Lord and neglect His work.

As a criterion to govern us in our contribu-

tions to our minister's support, permit us to suggest something like the preparation made for the priests and Levities, the regularly ordained ministers of religion, to whom pertained the administration of the word and ordinances in God's ancient church. About the same duties are now obligatory upon Christian ministers. To them were assigned suitable dwellings with all needful comfortable appendages, with the firstlings of all their herds and flocks, the first fruits of all their fields and vineyards, besides a tenth of all their increase, with a large portion of many costly sacrifices and offerings which were continually making, besides many other less sources of income; making in the whole a very ample support for the ministry, who, under the wise regulations of kind Heaven, had only to serve in the order of their course, which was one week in twenty-four in actual service in the temple—all the balance of the time devoted to the study of the law and other things connected with the duties of their office. Those who regard study as amusement will conclude that the Jewish ministers had easy times, but none will talk so who knows how study wearies and fatigues the flesh, and often even in early life enervates or utterly prostrates both soul and body. These -

suggestions may lead you to profitable thoughts on this subject. At present you may regard them as antiquated, and urge that later regulations have entirely superseded them, and that the Gospel affords the only rule for Christians. Suppose it even so, that ancient regulations should be of no authority with us, (which however we do not entirely admit,) what was the Gospel rule with primitive Christians, which none will dispute being in full force and virtue with us. Our text gives it as fully, perhaps, as any verse we could quote. Among the primitive Christians, those who possessed wealth gave according to that they had, and not according to that they had not—and parted to others as each had need, so that there was none among them who lacked. This was the result of an orderly regulation of the Church, though the minute specifications of the whole operation are not given in detail, the result, that the laborers gave themselves continually to the work, and that every one had his needs supplied and lacked nothing, is clearly given; by which we understand, a reasonable competency, and not that scanty living allowed by some would-be Christians and loud professors of piety, who exult in their libertinism, (which they call Christian lib-

erty,) that they were neither saddled nor bridled nor ridden by the priest—that they had been members of the Church twenty-five years and had all its privileges, and it had not cost them twenty-five cents in all that time. Such spirits having taken quarters in our visible Zion is no doubt one cause of her operations and progress being so tardy.

Some complain of inability to give what they would cheerfully do, were they able. Now, Christian, look here! If we will suggest an easy obviation of that difficulty, by which, at the same time, you will become invested with all the necessary funds to do what you wish, will you adopt the suggestion, and do it? Well now, do n't draw back, but hear us one moment: it is simple, plain, and clear as a proposition can be; it requires no labored argument to get fairly and fully at the idea; it all lies in one word, self-denial; not to forego the greatest abundance of life's necessities, or its real comforts—such as every man should strive for, and pray to kind Providence to grant him, and until he shall have acquired which, it is at least questionable whether he is justly eligible to the list of contributors to any benevolent object: at least men must be just before they can be generous, else they can-

not expect the blessing of God upon their liberality. But our requisition is designed to bear only on the luxuries and sensual indulgences, which cannot properly be said to profit people in any way. That there could be savings accumulated from this source, we are very certain; enough to defray the expense of sustaining a minister at any and every point thought necessary on the whole globe, we have no doubt, as well as to meet every other expenditure called for in propagating the Gospel to the ends of the earth, and carrying out its important and noble designs; and then have plenty of money left, after all the naked were clothed, and the hungry fed, to afford facilities for education and high literary attainments in all the districts of the world.

Lest you think our calculations extravagant, we must specify a few of the contributors to our almost inexhaustless fund. What amount could be saved from needless splendor in buildings, where real comfort and usefulness are not even intended to be promoted? In this one single item we have an amount that numbers cannot estimate. Add to this what might be saved from needless apparel, both with males and females, about which there will scarcely be a word of

controversy, that there are millions upon millions spent annually to no valuable purpose, all which had evidently much better be appropriated to the works of charity and benevolence. Perhaps as great an amount could be saved from hurtful indulgences in the luxuries of the board, to furnish which in the most sumptuous manner, the rich voluptuaries make large expenditures, the tendency of which is only to induce gout, sensuality, and mental as well as physical enervation. In truth, there are no wanton expenditures but tend to injure or corrupt in some way. Sum up, in the next place, the foolish expense of costly drinks, the almost entire amount of which is an acknowledged misappropriation, an investment that cannot be expected to turn out any thing but evil, and that continually; the savings from this single item are incalculable, and the money had ten thousand times better be sunk to old ocean's bottom, than used as it is. We need not multiply instances, as we clearly might do to a great extent; it is plain that self-denial, in the most moderate form of it, will gather an ample amount to fill to overflowing the treasury of Zion, and furnish most ample supplies for her whole work, so far as mere money matters are concerned. What we do in

this way, we should try and do cheerfully, unostentatiously, and not sparingly.

One sentiment we would write most indelibly on your memories, which is, *be candid* with your preacher, and be careful not to excite expectations which are not likely to be realized. Do not think that good will result from holding out unfounded inducements to a minister, to invite his labors to a given point. I tell you that such a course is not right, and must result unhappily in some way. Be punctual with your preacher, and pay what you promise at or before the time. If you feel unable or unwilling to give, do n't intimate a different feeling; it is most highly calculated to impair that state of fraternal feeling, the existence of which is absolutely essential to his profiting them by his discourses. Either for a minister to be delinquent in fulfilling his engagement with his people, or for them to promise and not pay what he is led to expect, and has a right to, on account of their promises, it is a thousand times better not to promise, than to do it and neglect compliance, in as much as these are engagements entered into more immediately in the heart of the church, and in compliance with a special divine regulation between the Lord's own church and his specially appoint-

ed ambassadors, and they certainly should be regarded with so much sanctity as to be faithfully met. Be not like the Pharisees, who were extremely precise and punctual in little inconsiderable things, but criminally neglectful of weightier matters. Some rich professors—who in all good conscience ought to give their dollars, if not their crowns—in the exuberance of their kindness, press upon their ministers most unreasonable loads of small stuffs, such as nuts, apples, good vituals—which he knows the poor man's family is unsupplied with—or good drinks, if he should unfortunately find a relish for them, with a view to quiet his own conscience in its complaints against him for his own voluptuousness or parsimony, and, farther than that, ministering the merest pittance, in solid things, to the preacher's support. Perhaps none will dispute that the pulpit, when properly filled,

“Must stand acknowledged, while the world shall stand,

The most important and effectual guard,
Support, and ornament, of virtue's cause.

There stands the messenger of truth; there stands
The legate of the skies: his theme divine,
His office sacred, his credentials clear.

By him the violated law speaks out

Its thunderings, and by him in strains as sweet
As angels use, the Gospel whispers peace.
He 'stablishes the strong, restores the weak,
Reclaims the wanderer, binds the broken heart.
And armed himself in panoply complete,
Of heavenly temper, furnishes with arms,
Bright as his own, and trains by every rule
Of holy discipline, to glorious war,
The sacramental host of God's elect."

Seek then—as you would seek for a sure guide to virtue and to glory—a preacher who knows and loves the truth, whose heart and life are full of humble, holy zeal, who clearly shows he feels the grand importance of the embassy on which he is sent. Finding such, let it be your interest and your pleasure to stand by him in his conflicts, as you would by a faithful leader in a glorious cause, feeling that you are brethren leagued by ties as sacred as the grave, to peril your all together in the precious though bleeding cause of a once crucified but now exalted Saviour, that through him you may achieve crowns of righteousness, to be worn forever and ever.

But now, after all that we have said on that part of the minister's support which consists in mere pecuniary contributions and carnal things, if you should cordially acquiesce in it all, and

add to it many things which we have not thought of, and others we did not think it advisable to notice in this place, all that would not be one half of what is needful to make a minister such a blessing to you as he might be. Indeed, if you withhold the other items we have yet to notice, and never contribute them at all, it will be to but little purpose that you comply with the foregoing hints. You may make your preacher rich, but you accomplish worse than nothing in that, if it be all you do for him. The faithful ambassador of Christ would no doubt greatly rather never receive a cent from you, in any way, than to have your gold, and nothing else than that which gold can buy. Ten thousand pounds by itself would be a very inadequate support for a "legate of the skies," when we properly consider his work; for we do not forget that money has injured, as well as aided many, in the prosecution of this glorious enterprise. The man who would desire to have more than a just and reasonable allowance, however much good he may do, in some way he will be certain to do more harm. The other duties of a church to their minister, however much less arduous, are not much less numerous than his duties to

them. Some of the prominent ones only we will take space to notice.

First, we should not, on any account, neglect to pray for our preachers. If you conclude, when you contribute money to a minister, that you have hired a man to do your praying, be assured you are in gross darkness even until now. So far from your being released in this respect, it becomes the special duty of the preacher to excite you to pray more, and particularly to pray for your minister; it is all important in order to his usefulness to yourself or others: unless the Lord help him, you know his efforts must be unsuccessful. Every reason that can be urged why a preacher should pray for his people, is also a good one why they should pray for him. If you are not sufficiently anxious for his success to make it a matter of earnest prayer, that very want of solicitude in your own heart will render it in a great degree impervious to any impressions he might attempt for your good. This is exemplified in the fact, that bigots in religion rarely get happy or enjoy themselves, only under the administrations of ministers of their own sects. We recollect an old leader in religious meetings, of whom it is notorious, even among the dispassionate of his own

order, that under the administration of a very ordinary minister of his own sect, he almost invariably becomes entranced, either with joy or grief; just as the passions and emotions of the speaker may seem to vary; and whatever gestures may be made, or whatever sentences uttered, a gaping mouth, staring eyes, with actions and gestures almost approaching to adoration, devour most eagerly every sentence and motion of the speaker, as a most extatic and delirious rarity, with alternate shouts of approbation or grievous lamentations; and long or short, he continues to feast without the least show of satiety, but with increasing appetite and growing delight, until the speaker gives way to one of another order. Then, though he might be a very superior spirit, in every way; though he thunder like a Peter, in strains of eloquence like vivid lightning, and pour in most moving torrents into his ears the most heart stirring truths, in such melting appeals as might fall from the sympathetic lips of a Barnabas or Apollos, where the heart of every worshiper was overwhelmed with joy, he only seemed uninterested who before was so much elated. All this we account for on the ground of the man's

solicitude about one speaker and his cause, and his indifference about the other.

We look upon this as an extreme case, to be sure; yet it gives very strikingly a view of the principle in human nature we design to portray. The fact that this is rather a vicious than a virtuous feeling, constitutes no impediment to the force of our argument; which is to show, that we must take an interest in a man before he can be extensively instrumental in winning us to his measures; and that solicitude about both the man and his measures is very important, in order to awaken a suitable zeal in their favor. Where a hearer does not desire the success of a speaker, let his object be what it may, there are various ways by which the former may retard, if not defeat the efforts of the latter. Though he may open not his mouth, he may pour contumely and cold water on it, just by looks and gestures, often more effectual than he could by words.

That our dispositions in this respect are very much under the control of our own agency, there is but little question. After all that may be justly said about human inability, few or none will pretend to say that any have failed in sincere efforts to do good, on the ground of imbecility, where they have looked to the Lord for

help, who has promised to be a present help. The Lord being our sufficiency, and always present and willing to aid us in doing what he requires us to do, we should not think of being excused on the ground of frailty. If we are weak, he is strong; if we are in the dark, and do not consequently know how to do things as we ought, He is the true light, which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world; if we be stupid and dead, he is our life; if we be guilty, he is our righteousness; if we be unholy and unworthy, he is our sanctification; in a word, whatever we lack, He is our all in all, to whom we may continually resort, and from whom we may be assured we shall never be turned away empty; knowing, that "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Psalms ciii. 13.

We should therefore imbibe and cultivate a feeling of ardent anxiety about the success of our minister. We should pray for him, that he might have utterance, zeal, humility, wisdom rightly to divide the holy word, and heavenly unction, in all his exhortations and sermons to breathe a spirit of meekness, love, and purity into the people of his charge. The Apostles, under God, relied much on the prayers of the

church, as all preachers have a right to do; and O, what a lack it will be, if they do not receive them. If any thing can make amends for this destitution, we know not what it is.

You should also co-operate with your preacher in his laborious work. He is not employed to release you from labor, but to be the instrument of enlisting you the more, making you more vigilant and active in all the duties of a good man and a Christian. If he performs his own work properly, it will be as much as he can do; you ought not to think of imposing your duties also on him; his are well defined, and so are yours.

Don't think him egotistic or arrogant because he may teach with the authority which God giveth, and not as the Scribes. You should endeavor so to respect and confide in your minister that you would obey him in the Lord; that is, do what he exhorts and instructs to be done in accordance with the word of God, without thinking him assuming or yourself condescending.

The horror of being priest ridden, felt by the people of the United States, has been so long regarded as such degraded vassalage, that to avoid even the slightest appearance of it, many have run entirely into the opposite extreme—which you know is much easier for our natures,

than to stop and maintain a reasonable medium position—and denied to the counsel and reproof of the Christian ministry that respect which is so essential to its utility. Every one knows that advice and instruction is offered to but little purpose, where he who offers it is looked upon with insignificance. Every congregation ought certainly to try to get a minister whom they could esteem and love as an overseer and guide, and not regard it impertinent for him to inquire minutely into their condition, and to remark with affection and candor on any imperfections he may think he discovers. It used to be thought by the wise, that they were our best friends, who told us of our faults most plainly. Some are still of the same opinion; but many seem to think it very incompatible with friendship to have their faults strictly criticised.

Any minister who will be faithful in the exposure of vice, human depravity, and error, should not expect to avoid heavy and often malignant censures. There are none who labor to put down vice and promote virtue, that stand more in need of the active co-operation of their friends than the herald of the Gospel. If he be an overseer, what will it avail, if the laborers are not obedient? If he be an officer in the host

of Israel, what will it profit, if those under his subordinate command disregard his instructions? There are perhaps few greater errors in the world than that the work of promoting the Gospel is the work of the ministry, in which the laity are to be only lookers on. In the work of God, it is of the first importance to have union and co-operation between preachers and people. Negligence on the people's part, would be like an army leaving its commander to do all the fighting, or a company of laborers leaving the overseer to do all the work. We should stand by our preacher, and endeavor to uphold him in any measures which may evidently be agreeable to the will of God. We should be free in making suggestions where we thought his plans might be improved; yet we should not refuse to act harmoniously on very slight considerations. We should not unreasonably complain of our preacher, or of his labors, especially when we have reason to believe his motives were good, and his best endeavors were made. In clamors against him, we should be exceedingly cautious how we take sides with wicked men who oppose him; we should be well assured that the opposition was well founded, and then we should put ourselves to much pains to labor privately and

personally with him, and try if possible to save his reputation, knowing that as a minister he is the property of the Church, and can only be valuable in proportion as he is well reported of from those that are without. If we would do to others as we would that they should do to us, we would always take the part of the absent person who might be reproached in our presence. No man is worthy of being called a friend who does not do it. We should feel it a still more imperious duty to defend a minister behind his back. The fact that he has to do with and for so many, and can have but little personal intercourse, except with a few—especially when a missionary—makes it more evidently proper that he should be protected by his friends in his absense.

The very peculiar burdens resting upon the ministers of the Cross, and their more immediate connection with the prosperity of the good cause, is another reason why we should bear them up. The Saviour, who knew the exceedingly delicate responsibilities of their station, manifestly breathes a peculiar sympathy for them; and extends his personal condolence, as would seem evidently suitable in view of the weight of difficulties to be endured by them,

while promises of the most precious and encouraging character are made to them; such as "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," and many others, no less calculated to inspire fortitude and fearless courage in the prosecution of this most arduous and important work. O how hard it is to feel it an imperious duty, that we cannot be released from, to battle and expose the most favorite indulgences of our best earthly friends, knowing that we must at least gain their temporary and perhaps lasting ill will thereby, even making those of our own house our most inveterate foes, because of our efforts to do them the most incalculable good. To persevere in blessing and doing good to those who constantly revile and persecute us, is hard work, try it who will; yet for the minister of the meek and lowly Jesus not to do so, would be almost high treason against the government of God. Because the preacher is so sacredly bound to expose every vice, we should not complain of his pointed manner, though he should even say as Nathan to David, "*thou art the man.*"

Why do people claim it of their ministers to preach as though they had no allusion to any present? And why is it that he is held guilty of so unpardonable an offense for making personal

allusions from the pulpit? If he had auditors whom he knew to be guilty of theft or murder, must he speak of these crimes as though nothing of the kind had transpired since the days of Cain? Even to preach on pride, covetousness, laziness, injustice, lying, lasciviousness, or on the punishment due to them. The people of the world seem to have made a sort of law, without consulting either the minister or his Master, by which he is put under obligation to touch these topics lightly; a conformity to which, subjects the faithful minister to the heavy censure of being an indecorous rustic, altogether unfit to minister to that sort of refined delicacy, by whom a soft apology is claimed for the use of such phrases as "*hell*" and "*damnation*;" and who are ready to faint at hearing the demerit of sin portrayed in fearless and vivid colors. Such miserable arbiters of taste and propriety have exerted an incredibly disastrous amount of influence in the world. None can tell the number and plausibility of the machinations and subterfuges of the wily adversary, to prevent a faithful exhibition of the heinous deformity and demerit of sin.

Every society should take an interest in the appointments of its preacher, by giving them

due publicity, by using all respectful efforts to have as general and devout attention as practicable, and by having the place of worship made as comfortable as possible. If practicable, avoid not only delinquency, but tardiness in attending; be at your seat in ample time, and try to have all your family there. Take great pains in teaching the minors how to deport themselves in the house of God. Never go to the Church merely for carnal amusement, to see and be seen, or to make a show in any way; especially never go to loiter around the Church, and not hear the sermon. We are satisfied that those who do this are not sensible of the stupifying influence of such conduct on any religious, moral, or even gentlemanly sensibilities they may possess—made by the dint of a mother's first best labors for them. Such a course, long indulged, seldom fails to transform men of some gentility into downright rowdies.

These things, though you may call them small items, we assure you are no less important than sharpness to the share that turns the fallow, or grease to the wheels of the burdened car. Certain it is, that if the little duties of religion be neglected, the larger ones, if attended at all, it must be under almost infinite disadvantages.

The idea that correctness in fundamentals is all that is essential or even very important, and that scarcely any amount of defect in minor things will be any serious impediment to salvation, we think is most pernicious teaching, and ought not to be countenanced; because, "he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much, and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." Luke xvi. 10.

Even slight manifestations of respect for your minister and his message often excites a very felicitous influence on his energies, which richly compensates for the trouble. Be careful of what you call little things; for these foster the large ones, and are often the occasion of them.

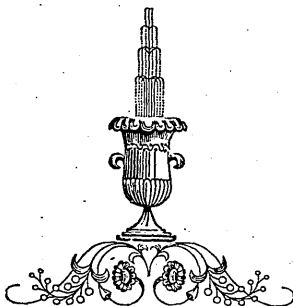
Now in our concluding remarks, we would not counteract all that we have said on the subject of liberality, while we beg of you to be sure to take the entire discourses of your minister home to yourself, for your own special use. In this respect we will excuse you with a very scanty attention to other people and their wants, if you let them gather for themselves as they may choose and be able. For yourself, try to take all, even every word, and use it for yourself, and we will not fault you for neglecting to see so particularly what part will fit others. The

practice of hearing more for others than for ourselves, is much to be deprecated; in so doing, we often make such very bountiful appropriations to others as to leave but little for ourselves. A very shameful contrast might be drawn between men's liberality in this, and the apportionment of their carnal things for the support of their minister. Here they act the miser, there the princely benefactor; here penurious, there prodigal. In this sense, men would often give all for the benefit of others. For such we would reverse the proverb, that scattering tends to increase and withholding to poverty, and in that sense we would enforce it. We should endeavor to hear for ourselves more than for others. "Take heed, therefore, how ye hear; for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken that which he seemeth to have." Luke viii. 18. How often do we find hearers most industriously employed in fitting out every one in the audience more bountifully than themselves.

If the figure be not too rude, permit us to advise the more frequent and vigilant use of the rake and less of the pitch-fork; in using this, we pitch things from us, with that we rake them to us. Our taking all can do the rest no harm; for

they can take the same that we do to as great an amount, and still it is every jot, to every one, as good for all the rest. All who grasp for it are sure to get, and still the common stock is not diminished, but increased thereby.

For the more who take with a free good will,
Will make the banquet sweeter still.



SERMON III.

BY REV. J. ANDERSON.

On the River and Tree of Life.

And he showed me a pure River of Water of Life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the River, was there the Tree of Life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the Tree were for the healing of nations.—REVELATION xxii. 1, 2.

The Apostle, in this chapter, has doubtless given us the finishing touch to that inimitable description of the city of God contained in the preceding chapter. Some able commentators have insisted that every expression of the verses chosen as our text should have an exclusive bearing upon the Church triumphant. However plausible such an hypothesis may appear to the superficial observer, yet an inspired Apostle has affirmed that the whole family in heaven and earth is one. I deem the position at least tenable, that the Spirit of inspiration doubtless intended this development of the Gospel provisions for the mutual comfort and benefit of both departments of his blessed Zion. Therefore, as our

design at present is not so much a doctrinal discussion as of practical utility, we shall proceed to an examination of the subject, according to the following arrangement:

I. We shall speak of the *River of Life*: its design and properties.

II. *The Tree of Life*: its location, its fruitfulness, and sanative qualities.

Then according to the proposed method, we shall speak,

I. *Of the River*: its design and properties. The Apostle here appears to have had the most sublime and soul-animating prospect of the extent and benefits of the atonement; so much so, that with the aid of the most appropriate figures, with a soul wound up to the throne of God, and exerting itself under the influence of Divine inspiration, they are yet too grand and majestic to be evolved in the feeble language of mortality. He showed me

1. *A River*. This, as we have intimated, has a manifest reference to the atonement. Examine the metaphor. A river is usually formed by the confluence of several tributary streams; after the union of which it rolls its aqueous torrent into the boundless ocean. So we might say of the atonement: first, God the Father loves

the world; and secondly, the compassion and mercy of Christ, the second person in the Godhead, unites with the Holy Spirit's sympathy, and all, sweetly co-operating, effect the scheme of redemption. Here, then, is a river, formed by the confluence of three infinite streams, spreading itself into a vast illimitable ocean—rolling through the covenant of grace in majesty—unruffled by one satanic breeze—bearing serenely upon its bosom every sincere believer in Christ, from the birth of time to the consummation of all things; and will finally bring them around God's imperial throne, there to dwell forever. This perfectly accords with other parts of inspiration. For, says the Psalmist xlv. 4, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High." And Isaiah declares, chapter xxxiii. 21, "That there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers with streams." Therefore, when we view these passages of Scripture in connection with the character of God, and the nature of his moral government, it is quite obvious that God, in the device of man's redemption, was not in the least circumscribed; but that all, without exception, have the exalted privilege of becoming "heirs

of God, and joint heirs with Christ in glory." But more specifically, it is

1. *A River of Water.* Here we would remark, that the atonement and its benefits are brought to view by the term water, which is a very common figure employed in the Bible to represent the grace of God. For, says the prophet Isaiah iv. 1: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." And Christ declared to the woman at the well of Samaria, if she had asked of him, "he would have given her living water." "For the Spirit and the Bride say, come; let him that heareth say, come; let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

We would also observe, that the analogy existing between water and grace is not only sublime but striking. 1st. Water has a tendency to cleanse, so has the grace of God. 2d. Water will purify, so will grace. 3d. Water will slake the thirst, so will grace. 4th. Water will sustain, invigorate, and perpetuate life, so will the grace of God. Yea, more, grace will produce life, eternal in its nature. For "he showed me a pure River of Water of Life." But the chief difference lies in this: that water is material, and hence can only effect material objects;

whereas, the grace of God is immaterial, and of course it alone can effect and purify the ever enduring principle of man. It produces spiritual life in all its recipients, perpetuates, and sustains it in time, and in eternity. For the Saviour has said, John iv. 14: "That whosoever shall drink of this water, he shall thirst no more, but it shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life."

2. *It is pure.* That is, entirely removed from every thing that is unholy. It was provided by the Lamb of God, "who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." Neither angels, nor devils, nor men, had any part in the device or execution of this scheme, and hence it is unsullied, it is pure.

3. *"It is clear as crystal."* The crystal signifies a pure pellucid gem, of a durable nature, and through which, with the natural eye, aided by light from the material sun, we can behold objects with as much perspicuity, and more dazzling lustre, than otherwise. So this River is "clear as crystal." Pure, unmixed, without alloy, entirely of gracious and heavenly origin, no mixture of human merit. So this atonement is beyond all price. It is represented in Rev.

xv., by the figure of a "sea of glass, mingled with fire;" in which the justice and mercy of God blend in perfect unison, while all the attributes of his nature harmonize in man's redemption. In short, it is like a sacred mirror, into which, by faith, we can look and view the promised inheritance beyond life's narrow bounds; or like a reflecting telescope, receiving rays from Jesus Christ, the moral sun, which irradiates the mind, opens in rich prospective view the throne of God, and unfurls in transporting sublimity the joys that shall be revealed.

4. "*It proceeds out of the throne of God and the Lamb.*" That is, by the *authority of God and the Lamb*. Here we have a grand elucidation of the exalted character of Christ, and his unoriginated divinity, and hence his perfect equality with the Father. They have but one throne; they are emphatically one; and salvation in glory flows from this one God. A throne signifies power and authority: therefore by the power of God and the Lamb was this atonement made, and by the same authority does it roll its unsullied waters, gliding in placid murmurs, for the ablation of Adam's degenerate and wo-stricken family.

II. Speak of the *Tree of Life*, its location, its fruitfulness, and sanative qualities.

1. *The Tree of Life.* Here the Apostle has almost verbatim transcribed the language of the Prophet Ezekiel, xlvii. 12. In which the provisions of the Gospel, growing out of the atonement, are represented as first issuing from under the threshold of the sanctuary: small and apparently insignificant in its commencement, but gradually extending its borders, and deepening its channel, until it becomes a mighty river, carrying fertilization, health, and spiritual vitality wherever it goes. "And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from Engedi"—that is, the fountain of pure water, or fountain of the kid; because of its peculiar situation among lofty rocks, which overhang the valleys, and hence scarcely accessible to any other creature—to En-eglaim, a city situated at the head of the Dead Sea, and at the mouth of the river Jordan. Or, in a spiritual sense, the healing virtues of this river shall be felt, in their vivifying and holy influences, throughout the extended boundaries of God's militant Zion. This passage of Scripture is explained by the Jewish Rabbis, by a reference to Zechariah xiv. 8, where "the living waters went forth from Jerusalem, half towards the former sea, and half towards the hinder sea," blessing the inhabitants

of both dispensations with the riches of redeeming grace. According to our conceptions of these two collateral passages, the idea to be conveyed is identically the same; and the principal difference lies in their having been viewed at different periods, under different circumstances, and at different points of their progressive developments.

Ezekiel saw it in its rise, and in its progressive movements, until the Church militant stood forth in the morning of millennial bliss. The beloved disciple alone was permitted to view her in the zenith of perfection: robed in the habiliments of the Saviour's unspotted righteousness, and standing forth pre-eminently glorious, amid the inexpressible raptures of an endless fruition. In the former passage, the trees which grow on the banks of the river, evidently mean the ministers of the gospel, who keep near to holy ordinances, and derive all their verdure and fruitfulness from its healing waters. While in the latter, the Saviour of the world, the sum and substance of all bliss, is primarily intended. Hence we conclude that this passage has direct reference to the Tree of Life, which grew in the garden of Eden, which was evidently a sign of the covenant made with Adam, and a pledge

of eternal life. This tree, according to some expositors, represented Jesus Christ. If this be a correct explication, then the tree originally placed in the garden was a type of the Messiah, by whom spiritual life and vitality would be restored to all sincere applicants applying thereto. For, says the Apostle, Revelation xxii. 14: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Again, John i. 4: "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." And again, Collossians iii. 4: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory." From these passages, it is most obvious to my mind, that Christ is the Tree of Life here spoken of, and that life eternal is guaranteed to all true believers in him.

2. *Its location.* "In the midst of the street of it." The pronoun *it*, in this place, stands for, and personates city in the preceding chapter; and of course the street—which we shall here take figuratively—means the commandments of religion, and has reference also to this city. This has a two-fold signification, but the same in substance. 1st. In her militant; and 2d. In her triumphant state. To prove that the city

means the Church of God, we would just refer your minds to the testimony of divine inspiration. Says the Saviour, Matthew v. 14: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." Again, the Prophet Isaiah declares, lx. 14, speaking to Christians, or the Church: "Ye shall be called the city of the living God, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel." Again, the Psalmist, xlv. 4, 5: "There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early." How beautifully this accords with the expression in our text. "God is in the midst of her," says the Psalmist, and St. John says, "in the midst of the street of it." Both having reference to the Church of God, under the figure of a city, most magnificently constructed, and forming the grand metropolis of Jehovah's empire. The Apostle Paul expresses the unanimity or oneness of the Church in such emphatic language, as not to be misunderstood; he says: "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." This needs no paraphrase. It is grand; it is sublime; it is glorious.

But to return. According to the above re-

marks, the street means the commandments of religion. Supreme love to God. "This is the first and great command." "And the second is like unto it: thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "For love is the fulfilling of the law." The same sentiment is beautifully expressed by the Apostle James, iii. 17, under the term wisdom, by which the same happy and holy affections of the mind are produced: "For the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

Therefore, with this view of the subject, how expressive and appropriate is the language of Solomon, when speaking of true wisdom, which is a communication from God, the foundation of pure religion, and forms our ground of blissful immortality: "She is a Tree of Life to them that lay hold upon her; and happy is every one that retaineth her." Prov. iii. 18. "The Tree of Life," says Dr. Scott, "is proverbial for that which prolongs life, and makes it very delightful and pleasant, as well as firm and durable." So Christ is called, in Revelation ii. 7, xxii. 2, 14;

“The Tree of Life.” “Alluding to the Tree which grew in the garden of Eden, as He gives natural, spiritual, and eternal life:” so says Dr. Gill. But farther, “In the midst of the street of it.” The streets and allies of a city, naturally speaking, serve the purpose of a convenient and easy approach to any part of it. So the streets of this city afford an easy and agreeable passage to the source of happiness—which is Christ, the Tree of Life—to all its blessed inhabitants, in every possible condition: either in this or the future world, in time or eternity. This is shown by its location. Where is it? Right in the midst of the street of this glorious city. Recollect, this mystical city has but one principal street, which extends throughout the whole length of the Redeemer’s kingdom. And that is love to God and man. It is sufficiently wide for all the world to walk in it abreast. For the Psalmist says, cxix. 96: “Thy commandment is exceeding broad.” Truly this love—of which ours is but a slight emanation—is the soil of eternity, in which plants of glory and felicity flourish forever and ever. And “we must be rooted and grounded in love.” Ephesians iii. 17. This love is emphatically the rapture of saints—the essence of their blissful being—the vesture

of divinity—the nature of God. The Tree of Life, then, has a lofty and commanding location. “In the midst of the street” of this glorious city—there it grows, it flourishes, it thrives, in the fertile soil of boundless love—o’ershadowing the saints of God, and feasting their immortal souls on the rich, luxuriant fruits of eternal life. “For to him that overcometh, I will give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” Revelation ii. 7.

2. *On either side of the River was there the Tree of Life.* On each side, or rather on both sides at the same time. Thank God, this wondrous tree of immortality is not locomotive, nor confined to either department of Zion; but is essentially present in heaven and earth at the same time; and is perfectly accessible to all, except the wilfully vicious and profane. For it is located “in the midst, on each side of the River of Life;” extending from the days of Adam, in a direct line, to the end of time; and onward, through the city of the New Jerusalem, of fifteen hundred miles cube, until all the inhabitants of that blissful realm are superlatively blessed. Finding none without the hallowed boundaries of that heavenly pavilion disposed to submit to its sanative virtues, it ebbs and flows back majesti-

cally to the fountain from whence it emanated, until it is perfectly swallowed up, and lost to the gaze of men and angels, in the vast, illimitable ocean of its own infinitude. But the thought is too lofty and overpowering for human conception; while robed in mortality. Therefore, permit me, with reverence, to sit down at the feet of an inspired Apostle, and with him adore "the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." Rom. xi. 33. Although the subject is so sumblime, you must permit me, my brethren, to attempt to pursue it a little farther. "On either side of the river was there the Tree of Life." God is his own interpreter; and there is no surer way of deciding upon the meaning of one passage of Scripture, than by comparing it with other parts of inspiration. Hear, then, the declaration of the Prophet Ezekiel: "And by the river, upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed." The river, in both these passages, doubtless, means the grace of God in providing the atonement and its benefits, which are calculated to cancel our guilt, wash away our moral

defilement, and prepare us to take our delectable stations on the right hand of God. It may, however, have a two-fold signification.

1. *The Atonement in its actual provisions.*—This was effected above eighteen hundred years ago on Mount Calvary—when from the opened veins of our incarnate God the crimson tide of his atoning blood flowed most freely, for the redemption of man. The Prophet Zechariah, xiv. 8, says, “It shall be in that day that living waters shall go forth from Jerusalem.” Here, the expression, “on either side of the river”—or atonement—may signify that before and since the crucifixion the people had access to the Tree of Life; or in other words, the inhabitants under the old dispensation, as well as the new, shared the blessedness of redemption. “For on either side of the river was there the Tree of Life.”

2. As the city with its streets, in the midst “of which grows the Tree of Life,” means the commandments and duties of religion, so, by a change of metaphor, we will say that “on either side of the river,”—or Jordan of death—which separates the two departments of Zion, “is there the Tree of Life.” Yea, with strict propriety, we may say, that in that part of the city which is

yet militant stands the "Tree of Life"—it grows, it flourishes, it thrives, producing and perpetuating spiritual life in all the servants of God. "For the bread of God is He which cometh down from Heaven, and giveth life unto the world." And again says Christ, "I am the bread of Life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." John vi. 33-35.

Oh, glorious promises! bringing joys indescribable by mortal tongues. But are they confined to this world? Shall the inhabitants of God's blessed Zion always dwell in a land where their greatest joys must blend with woeful sorrows? Nay! blessed be God! They shall be removed from such an angry conflict, but not from the Tree of Life. They shall rise above the turmoils of time, and on the shores of a blissful eternity forever shout hosannas beneath the yielding boughs of that blessed tree; for in heaven, also, grows the Tree of Life. Oh glorious hour! Oh blessed abode! when all the servants of God shall assemble around Mount Zion—when the voices of those attuned under the Gospel economy shall mingle with those of the Patriarchs and Prophets—when they shall "sing the song of Moses and the Lamb." It will cre-

ate such a flame of rapturous enjoyments in Canaan, that all Heaven will be filled with an ecstatic emotion—which shall continue full, glowing, ardent, and irrepressible throughout an endless eternity.

3. *Its Fruitfulness.* “It bears twelve manner of fruits.” This phraseology is highly expressive of the delicious variety in its fruitfulness. “Twelve manner of fruits.” Therefore the saints of God shall never famish. And why should they, since this *Tree* grows “on either side of the river”—always blooming, sending forth, ripening, and scattering its rich, luxuriant fruit, all over the city of God. For, says Ezekiel, “The leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed.” When we examine the fruits of this wondrous Tree, how expressive and sublime is the language of the exiled, yet beloved Apostle: “It bears twelve manner of fruits.”

Here let us pause a moment, to examine the nature and qualities of those “twelve manner” which grow upon the Tree of Life,” as revealed to us in the fifth chapter, twenty-second and twenty-third verses of Paul’s letter to the Galatians. It should be borne in mind that the fruits of this Tree are not of earthly growth, designed

to feast the animal appetite, or gratify the natural taste of man; but they are purely of an intellectual character, and well calculated to satisfy the unbounded desires of the immortal mind. They are, the blessings of the atonement—the fruits of the Spirit—the wonder of angels—the rapture of saints—the bliss of Heaven—the fulness of God. For, says the Apostle, “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” Here are nine kinds of fruit; and we may add from St. Peter’s 2d Epistle i. 7, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity, to make the “twelve manner” which are borne by the Tree of Life,” and communicated by the Spirit to all the saints of God.

2. *It yields its fruit every month.* It is no barren tree, but constant to produce its most precious fruits. “It shall bring forth new fruit,” says the Prophet, “according to his month;” that is, every month. There shall be a rich and endless variety. In order to prevent satiety, and create the greatest possible enjoyment, has God provided for all his saints twelve manner of fruits, which grow upon the Tree of Life, producing and perpetuating spiritual life in all who will reach forth the hand of faith, and pluck

fruit from its richly laden boughs. What a wonderful and mysterious Tree. Let us suppose, for illustration, a tree bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding them every month in regular succession, and in endless variety. Oh how grand, how majestic, how attractive would be the spectacle!

According to this view of the subject, which we think the most rational, there would always be one kind ripe and falling, fit for present use, and sufficient in quantity to last a month; while another "manner" is a little later in point of maturity. So that by the time the first is exhausted, the second is ripe; and so on through every month of the year. This view presents a tree of no ordinary character. In one branch you see the bud just making its appearance, in another opening, in another half blown, in another full blown; then the fruit forming, enlarging, ripening, and falling to the ground. Oh how rare is such a Tree as this. It is not to be found on earth; neither in Mahomet's sensual paradise; nor yet in the garden of the Hesperides. Nay, thank God, this tree is of Divine origin, having immortality for its nature, and eternity for its duration. It blooms in the Church; bears fruit in Canaan, on either side of the river, in the paradise of God.

But in the last place, "The leaves of the Tree are for the healing of the nations." This, we think, forms another strong argument in favor of our exposition of this subject. For to refer it exclusively to Heaven, would be to argue that our bliss above will be incomplete, and our happiness constantly interrupted by infirmities, to which, in this view of the subject, we must be inevitably subjected. But, thank God, we are not driven to such a sad conclusion. In Heaven there will be no need of healing remedies, for there sin shall never enter—there shall be no sorrow, no sighing, no tears; no more curse, for the former things are done away. There the inhabitants "shall never say we are sick;" but their enjoyments will be uninterrupted, tranquil, ardent, and superlative, throughout an endless duration. Therefore, "the leaves" may signify the means of grace; by an attention to which, through the blessings of God, we may be healed of our spiritual maladies—"For the leaves thereof shall be for medicine." "The nations," in the plural, that is, the nations of the earth, or in other words, all nations, may, through the constituted means of grace, reach forth the hand of faith, and pluck from the Tree of Life those leaves which grow on its extended boughs, and experience all their restorative virtues.

Oh, what magnificence, splendor, and glory inexpressible, mingle with the irrepressible emotions in the Christian's heart, while he contemplates the city of God, "his house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." It is this thought so full of immortality, that lights up his pathway on earth—shines into the darkness of the tomb—dispels all apprehensions of the future—and nerves him on to the land of Canaan. Heaven to the Christian is the center of attraction, the fountain of his bliss. Every thing endearing is there—his God is there—his Saviour is there—the Tree of Life is there—the ocean of love is there—saints and angels are there—his friends are there—all, all will be there, to swell the triumphs of redemption, and consummate his eternal felicity. There he shall be permitted to join the society of the blessed above, and sing the anthem of redemption, in higher, sweeter, nobler strains than ever it was chanted on earth. "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." Revelation i. 5-6.

SERMON IV.

BY REV. LABAN JONES.

God all in all.—Funeral of Mr. S. Peyton's Son.

Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon the earth that I desire before Thee—PSALMS lxxiii, 25.

We are called upon to notice another heart-rending item in the mournful bill of earth's mortality, in the early death of the lovely, affectionate, and interesting little son of Mr. Simeon Peyton, who was but yesterday the object of the flattering expectations and fond hopes of the kindest parents; just beginning to be a source of the greatest delight and comfort to a most devoted mother; and promising to be her solace and joy in the gloomy period of age and helplessness of declining years. Herein we are sadly, and, we trust, will be profitably admonished, that youthful sprightliness, and natural amiability and sweetness of disposition, fostered by the ardent solicitude of affectionate parents, and most prompt attentions of kindest and best physicians, form no barrier against the rude approaches and unkind strokes of the great ravager of life.

In a funeral service we do not aim to benefit the dead, but merely to respect and honor them; while, under God, we would endeavor both to benefit and comfort the bereaved and afflicted survivors. To be successful in the present case would be to us a source of rare consolation. We would not venture a desire that the condition of the departed child be altered. Dying in immature years, we would regard it highly reproachful to the government of a holy and all wise God to entertain even a fear of his future unhappiness. To our apprehension, we have never seen an item in any system of theology or summary of faith, more fraught with heart-chilling error, than that which speaks of elect infants; as though others were not elect, and hence less the objects of Divine complacency, and not so favorably regarded by the kind Father of all, in his purpose of redemption, through the mediation and sufferings of his beloved Son. While I hear my blessed Saviour say, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven," can I question their safety in the bosom of his love? Under the administrations of an all wise and holy Providence, the death of a child, and especially one of such unusual promise, would seem

almost an inscrutable occurrence. Are the purposes of his wisdom, his goodness, or his grace defeated? Surely not. O how unsearchable is his wisdom, and his ways past finding out. Often that by which we seem to be most affected soon proves evidently the best for us. If God has given us children, it is surely his privilege to recall them at his pleasure; and if thereby our drowsy sense of the importance of eternal things be excited, we are blessed and benefited, though we be deeply wounded.

God, in the ordering of all things after the glorious purpose of his will, and establishing the relations of the creatures of his universe to himself, is evidently exhibited as the *all in all* in the happiness of the great creation. In God there is fulness of joy, of wisdom, and goodness; he can, from his own resources, distribute abundant felicity to every class and condition of beings; and he does it with delight, giving to all liberally, and upbraiding not. To take supreme delight in God is the greatest wisdom and happiness of all creatures: saying with the Psalmist, "Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none in the earth I desire beside thee." Psalms lxxiii. 25. To the highly sublime and pious sentiments of this verse, we would invite your

attentions a little more at length. Strange, that while God is evidently our chief good, we should be so harrassed with competitors, many and powerful, for our attentions and our hearts. The world, with its deceitful charms, would make overtures for our affections and our services; and almost every thing around us would prefer claims upon us for a notice and regard that is only due to our Maker. Our friends, our nearest and dearest friends,

“How they divide our wavering hearts,
And leave but half to God.”

Our friends, who are they? Even our dear children, how interesting and lovely, who are they, that they should compete for our affections with Him who is altogether lovely, and to whom we owe an infinite debt of gratitude and love for richest benefits which no other friends could confer upon us? God is most worthy of our hearts, on him therefore should our affections most joyfully center.

Our text breathes the most sublime theology and most ardent piety. The illustrious Psalmist, with a mind highly cultivated, both in a literary and religious sense, in the vast range of his contemplations, explores both heaven and

earth; and standing as it were on a commanding eminence between time and eternity, he casts his inspired vision all around earthly and heavenly things, and duly considers the amount of good and happiness in the power of all to contribute; and comes to the enrapturing conclusion, that God is the all sufficient and never failing source of joy; and that no other object was worthy of his desires. And so it is with true believers, whose minds have been sublimated and affections imbued by religion's precious influences. They see, in God, the center and circumference, the *alpha* and *omega* of happiness and goodness; in sweet fellowship with him, they find the source, the sum, and entire consummation of all that is really worthy of a desire from an immortal mind. Go and visit the springs from which the boasted sons of earth draw their consolations; though fabled as chrystal fountains, you find them most murky and turbid sinks—the wines of the sensualist, which sparkle on the sight, prove dreggy on the draught; the laurels of the ambitious, which wave with such magnificent grandeur to the eye of the distant aspirant, what are they in the estimate of faith, or of a dying philosopher, but thorny and contemptible shrubs, whose pricks had pierced

them with many sorrows? Not only these, but things comparatively lawful and right, when enjoyed in proper bounds, owing to their inherent emptiness and vanity, must forever fail to produce any thing like that amount of solid felicity that results from fellowship with and delight in God. We are sometimes delighted with children or friends, and sometimes with abstract virtues, or sciences or pursuits, feelings which, when exercised in the proper sphere of subordination to God, are even praise-worthy; but excess in any of them must canker our comforts, and result in the fearful loss of our interest in the chief good.

O what profound and inexplicable kindness does God exercise towards us, when he takes away from us the dearest object of sublunary delight, when he sees it about to engross a forbidden square of our affections. We forget that God is ever jealous of his praise, and will not suffer it to be given to another—no, dear mother, not even to your lovely child—for children can be idolized as well as graven-images. In farther conducting your meditations on this subject, we propose to show, what we can only expect to do very imperfectly,

I. How God is apprehended by an enlightened believer.

II. The good in heaven or earth, to which God is infinitely preferable.

III. Why nothing but God can satisfy us.

IV. The believer's prospects in God, his portion.

To the entertainment of unworthy thoughts of God, we think, is attributable most of the destructive heresies and immoralities of the world. To feel right towards God, is the very soul of piety. Whether men can do so to any profitable extent, who do not think right about him, demands a doubt. Certain it is, that heart-felt and experimental acquaintance with God is essential to solid peace. He who spake as man never did, has said, "It is life eternal to know the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom he has sent." What the poet has said of the person of the blessed Redeemer, we might say of the adorable Godhead:

What think ye of Christ, is the test,
To try both your state and your scheme;
You cannot be right in the rest,
Unless you think rightly of him.

How much reason have we to fear that many think of the great I Am much as they think of an exalted seraph, and attach to Him no other

splendor or magnificence than they do to a mighty angel or towering cherub in glory. A libertine, besotted in sensuality and gross ignorance, could tauntingly say, "What is the Almighty, that we should serve him?" While he who sincerely sought to know God, was made exceedingly to quake and tremble by the slightest glimpses of his glory, so awfully wise, and good, and great was he. God is a spirit, invisible to us: hence it would be the greatest absurdity for us to attempt to reason about his nature or essence; but however imperfect all our thoughts about spirit must be, it is the best we can think of the incomprehensible Jehovah, to think of him as a spirit, associating in his nature every thing that is grand and good. Even with a perfect knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, we would know God only in part, and see only a part of the ways of his infinite wisdom and benevolence. So high is he, that we cannot be lifted up to see his glory; so deep is he, that we cannot penetrate the unfathomable depths of his wisdom; so wide is he in his nature, and the plans and operations of his benevolence, that thought and imagination get utterly lost in attempting to range the infinite region where he dwells and operates.

In his word and works, God has been pleased to make such a revelation of himself as will enable his intelligent creation to apprehend him altogether lovely, and to see in him their chief good. Let us notice a moment the powers, perfections, and offices ascribed, by both the books of nature and revelation, to our all glorious God. He only possesses omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, eternity, unchangability, infinitely, and perfectly harmonious unity, and independent sovereignty, which attributes are evidently incommunicable, and no other can possibly possess them; and these constitute only a part of the inalienable pre-eminence of the Deity above the most illustrious beings in the universe. See the unbounded perfections of His nature, so brightly displayed to the universe in all his word and works; his glorious justice, truth, holiness, righteousness, goodness, mercy, love, boundless condescension, and universal benevolence. It would be the height of vanity to attempt a portrait of his infinite excellency. It may be the delightful employ of the redeemed forever, to witness, with the most delighted wonder, the unfolding glories of the infinite and uncreated One; for the luster of his character will be the light of that better world, while the

smiles of his countenance will impart its most extatic joys; and without his approving presence their could be no heaven, while hell would be in comparison a trifle without his frowns. May we not exultingly say, either in time or eternity, "if God be for us, who can be against us." Hence we should be encouraged to seek his favor, though thereby the displeasure of all beside be incurred.

When David professed his chief joy in God, he doubtless considered the supreme excellency of His nature, which every way entitles him to the high offices He bears. How joyful to the oppressed and injured good man is the thought, that "the Lord reigns;" and how cheerfully do all, but the consciously guilty—who dread nothing more than the stern administration of absolute justice—ascribe to Him dominion, and power, and glory. How perfectly safe are the rights of all the universe of beings, when the Chief Magistrate combines all the attributes and perfections of the God of the Bible. God is our Sovereign, and we need not hesitate in ascribing to him independent, absolute, and uncontrollable sovereignty; for he is a God of holiness, goodness, truth, and mercy; his dominion is no usurpation: he rules by authority and not by mere

power. To claim obedience of the weak, on the mere ground of superior strength, is not the part of a mild and generous sovereign, but rather the course of a haughty tyrant. The Bible no where claims for its great Author the sovereignty he possesses and exercises, on the mere ground of his omnipotence, but every where founds it on the unerring wisdom, the intrinsic holiness, and infallible rectitude of his nature. The whole treasures of wisdom and goodness are his: he cannot err, he cannot sin. "The Judge of all the earth will do right" in every variety of circumstances, and every possible state of case that can come up in the vast and multiform affairs of all creatures, of all ages, and all climes. Ample justice and mercy is only sure to be administered when the Lord omnipotent rules. Every title that can give dignity to the wearer, rests upon and belongs of right to the Almighty; he is Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, Prophet, Priest, King, and infinitely glorious Benefactor.

And still more, to interest the mind of the pious believer in his God, he contemplates him in the magnificent grandeur of his works: the earth with its beautifully variegated scenery, and its appropriate adaptation for the residence

of man, and beasts, and birds, and fishes, with the countless varieties of other creatures: with the wisdom of their relative subordinations and proportionate amenableness to the high authority of their Maker. Cast a thought beyond these sublunary shores, to contemplate, as far as astronomical view can range, the glory of the shining heavens: the sun in glorious grandeur marching through the skies, pouring, in most incessant abundance, his mighty torrents of light and heat to the most distant orbs around, to illumine, warm, and cherish the immeasurable regions of his vast domain; together with the moon and stars, so wisely connected in the arrangement of the vast whole, and the sun their common soul and center. Notwithstanding the inconceivable rapidity, and seeming excentricity of many of their movements, near six thousand years have witnessed the most exact harmony of their motions. A comet may range through foreign space for ages and centuries, seeming regardless of the orbits of other mighty bodies; with wonder at its trail, it drives, seemingly lawless, into the vast regions of space unknown, yet, at a period exact to a moment, re-visits the neighborhood of the solar territories, publishing at every visit more than volumes of the vast

skill of nature's great Contriver. Truly, "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy works."

In every star that twinkles, and in every plant that grows,

In every peal of thunder, and in every wind that blows,

We see, we hear our Maker's praise.

Aided by the spirit and word of inspiration, we may carry our contemplations on the doings of the Holy One, into the better country, where saints and angels, with thrones, dominions and powers, and seraphim and cherubim dwell, in the immediate presence of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—where light, and splendor, and glory are perfect. To give us some idea of this, the sacred penmen have employed the richest figures and most sublime descriptions—most precious stones and metals, and purest waters, and living trees and richest fruits; yet we are taught that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man to conceive but the faintest glimpse of its indescribable realities.

There is still before us another brilliant field, in which to contemplate the glory of the Divine character—the work of Redemption, in which

God is exhibited in the loveliness of love itself, and in which believers are enabled to see much of the riches of their inheritance in his love and mercy. What can be equal in estimation to the interest that the Almighty God takes in the salvation and happiness of man, as brought to view in the Gospel of his grace. Out of view of the grand provisions of the Gospel, the best of mere natural men can only apprehend themselves in the most deplorably lost and undone condition, without one ray of well founded hope to comfort them, or to mitigate the fearfulness of the justly apprehended ruin that awaits them on account of sin. The sinner, the enlightened sinner, who considers his relation and consequent obligation to his Creator, with all the palliatives his fruitful imagination can devise in extenuation of the folly of his course and want of rectitude in his character, though at times he may fancy himself quite adorned with the rags of his own righteousness, the delusion will not serve him long; his soul cannot be at peace without more solid ground to rest its hope of future bliss upon. The greatest share of mere natural amiableness, accompanied with the most liberal human accomplishments, are but gross vulgarity and rudeness, in comparison with what God's

holy law requires, and what the Gospel of Jesus proposes to confer. Herein we have displayed such boundless mercy and matchless love, as the best intelligences in the universe are not only inadequate to exercise, but are incompetent to conceive of the bare existence of so infinite a store of munificence and grace. That a being should make sacrifices and encounter hardships to promote the interest and joy of a friend, was conceived to be possible; but that such a seeming exuberance of noble and generous feeling should exist, even in the bosom of God, as to stoop from the throne of his independent glory to the infamy of the Cross, to promote the interests and procure the most unmerited blessings for the most unrelenting foes; and then to put into operation, at the incalculable expense of his bounty, the glorious plans of his wisdom, to conciliate the beneficiaries, and incline them to accept the fruits of the labor of love, is a work at which angels are astounded.

O how great are the glorious mysteries of redemption. The more we attempt to pry into them, the more we are dazzled with the unfolding luster and glory of the grace, the mercy and the love of God; and the more perfectly is commanded the love and admiration of the as-

tonished mind. There is not one, even the most inexplicable item in the mysteries of the Gospel, that can, to a considerate mind, afford the least ground of objection to the precious plan; there is involved in them no inconsistency, no absurdity, no contradiction, but all is harmony, and beauty, and grandeur, so far as we can scan them. But the glorious profound is so deep we cannot fathom it—the refulgence of its brightness is so overpowering we cannot look into it. Here we are called to contemplate the incarnate Deity, who, though Lord of all, becomes servant of all, leading an humble, holy, yet persecuted life. Though guile was never in his mouth, he submitted to an infamous death with malefactors, to atone for the guilt of the sins of his persecutors and murderers.

The Cross, though ordinarily a place of disgrace, in the case of the blessed Redeemer, it reflects more real glory than all the thrones of the Cæsars, or all the created dignitaries that ever reigned. There is displayed the most unfaltering courage, the truest patriotism, the purest mercy, the most undissembled love, the tenderest compassion, the sincerest sympathy, the noblest friendship, the most undeviating rectitude, the sternest justice, the most boundless

disinterested benevolence. For, while the sufferings of the illustrious and holy Virtue were tantamount to the utmost demerit of the blackest sin—no less than the sinner is liable to in an awful hell forever—every motive to its endurance had reference to the good of others, who were not only helpless, but every way most undeserving of such signal regard. The humble believer, in contemplating the Cross, sees it encircled with the rainbow of peace, and every thing clustering there that is interesting, benevolent and magnanimous, proclaiming in loudest, clearest strains, the wondrous grace of God.

In the person of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, we see the perfection of the human mingled with the majesty of the Divine character, shining in his face. Even while he suffers as a man, he pardons like a Sovereign. Thus, viewing the Almighty in the excellency of his nature, the magnificence of his works, and the the dignity of his offices, may we not truly say, there is nothing in Heaven or in earth to desire beside him. But, more effectually to secure the sentiment and feeling of the heart, let us farther consider,

II. The good in Heaven or earth to which God is infinitely preferable.

With such as know not God, and are greatly engrossed with the flattering and deceitful things of earth, we can promise ourselves but little success on this proposition; but we will say to them, delighted as they may be with earthly pleasures, or treasures, or honors, or ease, that there is a better portion, there is a more substantial good, an exhaustless treasure, a never failing day-spring of pleasure, superior far to things in heaven or earth beside—it is delight in God. To make it plain—explore the earth, count up all that is good in it—that there is some, we do not deny—but be careful not to overrate its joys; we do not fear you'll set it down at under value. God made the world, and made it to be used, but not adored, not to be his lawful rival for your hearts. Its brightest scenes and greatest good, you know, are transient; and soon they must leave us, or we leave them.

Of earthly blessings, none exceed in value that of health. To secure it, we freely give our all beside; and yet, to be immortalized on earth, and endowed forever with its richest gifts, would not comport exactly with the wishes of the wise. It is our very genius to aspire after unseen good. Strange, that while we love life and health so much, we dread to hazard immortality

on earth. The wisest would not do it, even with indemnity against disease, disgrace, and the more common ills of life. Though life and health are precious, God and glory are incalculably more so. See this principle tested in the martyrdom of holy men, whose lives have been tendered them in exchange for their interest in the favor of God. Though importuned with the most ardent solicitude by friends and kindred near and dear, to accept the offer, and compelled to make choice between life accompanied with pleasure, ease, and friends, and rich and honorable preferments on the one hand, and God and holiness, with the flames, or rack, or gibbet on the other, the benefits resulting from God alone determines the joyful choice of the latter. Religion often imparts such joy to its possessor as to make him almost forget that he is afflicted. Uninterrupted health, great as the blessing would be, would cease to be appreciated after its enjoyment for a series of years. Let us associate with it such other blessings as the healthy are apt to desire—wealth, honor, friends, and pleasure, with security against losses and pains—and see if we can connect any thing with the condition of a healthy man, to which peace and fellowship with God will not be incalculably prefer-

able. Next to health, the carnal mind thinks wealth is most conducive to happiness, and it is among the last things of which sees the utter emptiness. How difficult it is to reconcile our natures to the idea that a life of virtuous penury is to be desired above one of pomp and affluence. To break the charm of gold, if not impossible with men, is a task of very great difficulty, to effect which volumes have been written. The Legate of the skies has spoken loud and long; his arguments have been cogent; his demonstrations clear. Conviction for a moment may be produced in the mind of the listening auditor; but anon he leaves his seat, and hastes with all his might to gain the acknowledged evil. His reasoning, his philosophy, and conclusions are dissipated like a morning cloud, and forgotten as a most trivial thing. But could one have success in gaining all the wealth of earth, the question is of grave import, how much would he be profited? Weigh it well, in reason's or religion's scales, and what is the result? Though wealth would furnish ease and luxury, with much of good that is lawful; it would furnish means of usefulness, benevolence, charity, and mercy; which to some of rarest caste of mind, would be privilege invaluable, but with thousands

it would be abused, and far better for them ultimately that they had never enjoyed it. But admit, without debate, every advantage supposed to be attendant on wealth, to counter-balance which, it is surely due the subject to consider the responsibilities and cares connected with such wealth—even reason makes it due from him to whom much is given to do much good; as our wealth increases, so, in equal proportion, our obligation to use it to some noble end increases. What weighty cares and fearful responsibilities rest upon the man of wealth. But even take it in the worldling's own desired sense—that what he has is his, to do with as he pleases; and that he is in no sense responsible, either to God or man—what then can he make of it, much better than a labyrinth of cares, and fears, and anxieties of most distressing character; for having much will not allay the thirst for more; and when obtained the care of keeping it will be no less pestiferous and harrassing than the toil and pains of getting. The question is of ancient date whether there is the greatest pleasure in the pursuit or possession of a thing. The great majority are clear that the good is in possession. But just admit, as wise men do, that employment is the spice of life; then view the cheerful la-

borer, be his business what it may — encouraged by hope of success in his toil, which day by day gets brighter, as the fruits of his labor mature, he passes away his days in peace, and nights in sound repose. Compare his life with the restless longings of the luxurious sensualist; or the dread and fearfulness of the miser, watching his gold; or any other description of a worldly man, who may have been successful in the amassing of earthly treasure, and sits down toward life's sequel, to enjoy the fruits of his labor; how sadly does he find that he has toiled for that which satisfieth not; and when perhaps too late, he discovers that in making preparation for a peaceful and happy old age, he has neglected the main thing, the one thing needful; not having considered that one may live and die well, without much health, or wealth, or fame, or many friends, save Jesus Christ, the friend of sinners.

In the case of pious Job, we have a striking instance of the great power of religion to comfort, in the absence of all other good, and when suffering the pressure of every calamity. See him from the enjoyment of the greatest affluence and the society of a lovely family, suddenly reduced to the loss of all, and with the most serious bodily afflictions brought down to the very

gate of death. With almost boundless confidence in the goodness and sufficiency of God, in the very midst of his exceeding great privations and sorest afflictions, he reasons with the resignation of a Christian philosopher, saying, shall we have good at the hands of the Lord and not evil; if the Lord, who is always good, appoint it, shall we not be as thankful for adversity as for prosperity, "though he slay me, yet will I trust him," as my chief good. Give, also, to the man of health and wealth the fairest fame and brightest honors earth can possibly confer; it may, in worldly estimation, still add to the desirableness of his condition, and sure we are it will add also to the reasons why thousands will envy him in their hearts, while they may flatter with their lips. Fame is only fleeting breath; and among all the objects for which men peril life and fortune, it is certainly among the least worthy. Give him also friends in abundance, and worldly pleasures to the full, without God to sanctify them they must be forever tasteless and insipid.

But still farther, in our efforts to make the fairest and most ample estimate of created good, in our contemplations let us press into heaven itself, and include every thing that we can form

any notion of there, as being desirable. Could we add to the most desirable sublunary condition, the whole splendor, and glory of the heavenly place—could we transplant the fair trees of the heavenly paradise, and intermingle their beauties with earth's tall cedars—could we connect the precious stones and pure metals of heaven, with the perfection of earthly magnificence—could we mingle the purer waters from the river of the Water of Life, with earth's most crystal fountains—and could we invite from heaven the society of angels and archangels, to join the choicest spirits of earth, and grace the entertainments of our mansion—bring also the golden harps on which the heavenly songsters sing so sweetly—in a word bring every thing from heaven but God, and connect it with the condition of a citizen of earth, it would still be infinitely short of the fulness there is in God. There is no place, no condition, though heaven and earth be combined to afford it, which can furnish consummate felicity for the human mind, but in God. Without his smiling presence, heaven would be poor, and earth but a scene of incessant sorrow. It is only in the approving presence and fond embraces of the holy One, that fulness of joy can be found in the universe.

In darkest dungeon or most lonely isle,
If God be there, and love and smile,
My pleasures shall surpass the great,
Tho' crowned and blessed by every state.

III. Next we notice why it is that nothing but God can satisfy us.

In this state of things, the most sublime policy is manifested. Happiness must ever be the first pursuit of rational beings, over whom God claims absolute and universal dominion, to secure eternally, the cheerful loyalty of the creature.

Their duty and interest are inseparably connected with the same authority to which they stand accountable for every word and action of life. There also they look for every blessing, mediation and advocacy, to help them out of every difficulty; for the Lord is also a Priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace is between them both—that is, between his kingly and priestly offices, sovereignty rests, in infinite stores of munificence and love. God's government is unlike all others, in that it addresses mainly our affections, while others address our fears; the form of its requisitions is "Son, give give me thy heart;" it seeks not a mere literal and reluctant obedience, but aims to secure the sincere and affectionate loyalty of the heart.

The great purpose of the divine government, is to confer happiness on its subjects. The honor and glory resulting to Almighty God from the wondrous schemes of his wisdom and benevolence, are, in our judgment, very far from being the controlling object proposed in his plans. That Jesus shall gain an eternal income of glory and praise from the work of redemption, and that an amount equal to his merit will never be given, we have no doubt. Yet we cannot suppose that the anticipation of that infinite and eternal renown was the main incentive to the magnanimous work, the incalculable sacrifice, and excruciating sufferings: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son" to die for it, that through the merit of his sufferings they might have everlasting life and glory. The sentiment, that God's own glory was the predominant motive to the great work, does not, in our apprehension, exhibit the Divine character adorned with all that disinterested and diffusive benevolence attributed to him in such boundless measure in his holy word. The good of his creatures is doubtless a powerful motive to much of the Divine conduct.

To see and feel the importance of the great and good things that God has done for us, is

certainly eminently calculated to reclaim and secure the long alienated affections of the human mind. Where we think our treasure is, our hearts will be: and to bind us by strongest feelings of love to God, he has so made us, that our richest and only abiding portion is in himself.

We have endeavored to show, that in comparison with God, all things else are insignificant and contemptible. Nothing but God can satisfy us, because in the original plan of the economy of creation, it was so ordered, that our delight should be in him. Such is the construction of the human soul, so large its hopes, so vast its capacities, so boundless its desires, that, could it possess the mighty whole of creation's benefits, there would still remain an aching void, that nothing less than God himself can fill. However much we seem delighted with created things, they will prove deceitful, and most clearly show their deluded admirers that there is nothing solid in them. Created things are fluctuating in value: as we have no true standard by which to estimate their worth, a whim of custom, or a freak of fancy, can depreciate their value to almost no account. But were created things of equal value to the estimate by our foolish hearts affixed to them, it would not obvi-

ate the idea of their entire inadequacy to fill our large desires; so transient in their duration, and so exceedingly uncertain the tenure by which we hold them, we cannot rest upon them with that confidence which is essential to solid peace. No possessions that human minds can have, are susceptible of an everlasting warranty, but those in God; our attainable interests there are all that are abiding, and ever increasing in their worth and capacity to make us good and happy. God and religion are ever new, and ever advancing in interest and loveliness. Here only are pleasures which never, no, never clog. All other things, with use and abundance, would grow insipid, unless God sanctify them to the comfort of their possessor; but in the ocean of his love there is no satiety, the springs which he supplies are always full, and always fresh: we drink, and drink again, with constant new delight.

Another reason why we cannot be content with less than God, is because the soul was never destined for inferior things. In its first formation, it was organized for nobler joys than earth can yield; but by the insinuating influence of sin, it has been beguiled away from its legitimate sphere and native element, and alienated

from its proper home; yet, though seared, and bruised, and mangled by the fall, it is not left without abundant testimonials of its primitive dignity and high destination. What is the chief end of man? To glorify God, and enjoy him forever. This being the original design of his Maker, in conformity with it, man was endowed with faculties competent to such a dear and elevated association; and out of this sacred relation, poor man must be an endless wanderer through a dreary waste, seeking rest, but finding none. O, will it not be horror inexpressible, when hope, now fond and flattering, shall be utterly blotted out of our bosom, of ever regaining that lost—but not now irrecoverably lost—holy and happy standing, from which, by our own folly, we have fallen, and to which our glorious Redeemer proposes, through the means of his blessed gospel, again to elevate and station us. Thanks be to God, that he has not suffered us to fall, under circumstances which would have forever precluded the interposition of his mercy and grace, to redeem and save us.

IV. And now, if God is the believer's all sufficient portion, let us lastly consider the character of his prospects, and riches of his inheritance in his Beloved.

Has he a treasure of inestimable worth, which it would be wise in the rich men of the world to sell all they have to purchase, to encounter the most fearful perils, and endure the greatest hardships, to secure? This much is surely plain to the most superficial reasoner, that if the Bible is acknowledged true, the value of our interests there are far beyond comparison with any thought of good beside; it is the one thing needful, and should be truly the all-absorbing theme of every mind. Of tidings, without dispute, it is the best, the gladdest ever announced on earth, greatly the most worthy of all acceptance, and of gravest and profoundest regard. Here we have interests lasting and invaluable.

If the Bible be rejected as the book of God, containing the revelation of the will of Heaven concerning us, then it is only worthy of that regard that is due to fables. But can we, in our sober senses, reckon up and set in order all the proof in attestation of its truth and authenticity, and then reject the holy book? Read the history of the world, the rise and fall of empires, with the general movements and continually varying character and standing of the nations of the earth, with the books of ancient prophecy before you, and then tell us, was it the political

sagacity and penetration of ancient seers, which enabled them with so much accuracy to anticipate or ante-date the world's history? or is it not most probable, that the great Eternal Spirit who made the earth and man at first—to whom even Deists and skeptics ascribe the perfection of boundless knowledge, prospective as well as retrospective—inspired them to write these holy prophecies?

Again: compare the variety of character, condition, education, and circumstances of the sacred writers—some of them being strangers to each other, living in different climes, and speaking different languages—with the unity of their designs, the harmony of their writings, and the same inimitable sublimity of ethics interspersed through all their writings, from the greatest and most learned, to the most obscure and illiterate. The supreme excellency of the morality of the Bible, over every thing the earth has ever produced, argues volumes in favor of the divinity of its origin: that forgiveness is more excellent than retaliation or resentment, that to love an enemy, and make great sacrifices for his good, displays a more splendid heroism, and truer greatness, than to shed, in fairest warlike combat, the blood of thousands.

It is not our purpose now to present an apology for the Bible. Thank the Lord, it is speedily wending its way throughout the whole earth, and is its own epistle of recommendation. The intrinsic worth of its truth and principles, and the glorious results effected by its precious light and influence, have gained for it a name and a glory that will never die. And when we consider the feebleness of its human advocates, in comparison with the powers in opposition, it demonstrates with much force, that a power unseen and infinite has been exerted in its favor. But if you say, without controversy, that the Bible is true, in what an unenviable and fearful, if not hideous attitude, are you placed, if you are still a neglecter of the great salvation it proposes. O, what alarming apprehensions are excited concerning thousands of otherwise sensible and clever persons, on the ground of their stupidity and negligence about the all important affairs of death and eternity. They know that procrastination is the thief of time, and that by it they are awfully jeopardizing their most precious prospects, and very brightest hopes; and yet, in their strange infatuations, they slumber even on the very brink of acknowledged ruin. While they talk most beautifully of religious

excellences, they almost totally neglect its precious remedies, acknowledged to be good and sure against the very calamities they see most clearly approaching, and which they most sincerely dread. The Bible presents the amplest remedy, and surest indemnity, against universal ill, and yet it is disregarded; acknowledged to be the best book, and yet receives less attention than romance or novels. O! what folly!

We assert that the man who has taken God for his portion, is in a better condition, and has a better inheritance than he who has all things else, and is destitute only of the favor of God. God can make a dungeon or a rack more felicitous than the world can a palace and a diadem. In his portion, the humble believer has sweet communion; also light, life, love, joy, peace, hope, with innumerable sources of delight here, that the world knoweth not of; and sure and bright prospects of the full enjoyment of God and heaven hereafter. Here he has justification, regeneration, and adoption, and, at least, partial sanctification, with assurances of a future and blessed resurrection, full redemption of soul and body from the dire effects of sin, ascension to heaven, there to be glorified with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and there, with saints and an-

gels, made the equal sharers in all the glory and bliss of heaven. When the believer contemplates the exigencies of his present condition, and anticipates his future necessities, he is led to inquire: Whom have I in heaven or earth, embodying so much loveliness, and so congenial to my views and feelings, as an object of love and worship, so calculated to call into exercise my warmest affections, and sincerest adoration, as God? No other object seems worthy of his desires. Whom have I to feed and clothe body or soul? for the whole store of earthly good is His. It is His to send the reviving rains, and productive seasons; and he at his pleasure can make the heavens as brass, and the earth as iron, and lock up every spring from which my wants are satisfied. None but He can ornament my naked soul with heavenly graces; no other wardrobe but that of his free grace can furnish a wedding garment for the soul; and none can give that spiritual aliment, that heavenly breath of God, that comes from above, after which my hungry soul, with the earnest simplicity of a suffering child to its parent, continually cries: "Lord, evermore give us this bread," for unless I get it I cannot live, and without it I must gnash my teeth forever with bitterest hunger. None

but He can give that water of life, to be in us a well of water, springing up to everlasting life, and without which we must suffer a parching, quenchless thirst, for ever and ever.

Whom have I, as a prophet, to teach me, to dispel the darkness of the mind, and lead me out of nature's night into the glorious light and liberties of the sons of God, and to instruct me in the things and the way of salvation? All other teachers are fallible: Christ Jesus alone is an unerring guide. Whom have I, as a priest, to make atonement for me? No other sacrifice but that of a dear Redeemer's blood is equal to the demerit of my aggravated transgressions. His righteousness only can meet the claims of God's holy law against me, and promise my pardon and sanctification before his throne. Whom have I, as a king, to rule and conquer my stubborn passions, and bring me into willing subjection to the gospel of salvation. Whom, as a shepherd, to take care of, and watch over me with fidelity, with capacity to defend and protect me, seeing how greatly I am exposed on every hand to the snares of a host of cunning foes? Whom to confide in as a friend, who will stick closer than a brother, and be ever ready to help in time of need? Whom as an interpreter and

advocate, to appear in my behalf before the Throne at judgment. In a word, whom have I to look at, or do me any good, in time or eternity, if deprived of my blessed Lord, and only solid good. To his believing children he is truly all in all, and every thing that they desire. O, that he might be so esteemed by the whole family of man.

Now, to conclude, dear reader, will you have the Psalmist's God for your God? We have endeavored to present you some glorious and interesting features in his character; we have tried to show that God is infinitely preferable to all other good, and that he only can satisfy the cravings of your immortal minds, and fill your large desires; together with the bright and encouraging prospects held out in the Bible for the humble believer—which we have no doubt the lovely child, whose death has occasioned this discourse, is now most bountifully sharing in the bosom of his heavenly Father. Now his youthful mind is happier far than precious friends, or all the joys of earth, could render it; and he is now better prepared to tell of the ample fulness there is in God, his portion, than I shall ever be on earth. Though he is gone from earth and friends, grieve not, he is not lost, but is gone to

a better One than father, mother, brothers or sisters—to a better country—to a longer, better home.

The fond relatives, we would most earnestly entreat, to try, by the gracious help of God—which is sure to be extended, if the effort be made—to rise and join the precious and happy company, where dear little —— lives, and praises on golden harp his heavenly King. And all who read these lines, permit us, with all the kindness and anxiety of a fellow-sufferer in sin—who trusts he has been brought to see in Christ Jesus, our common Saviour, an ample and certain remedy for all our woes—to seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near. O, permit us, in Christ's stead, to persuade you to be reconciled to God. We do believe that salvation is in your reach, and it is with you to accept it, and live and enjoy it forever in heaven with God, or reject it finally, and be lost forever. O, do be entreated to think before you farther go: life is uncertain, to-morrow may be too late.



SERMON V.

BY REV. LABAN JONES.

On Consistency.

Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he who condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.—
ROMANS xiv. 22.

Possessed of both the Indies, and all that the world calls good and great beside, the man must be miserable whose conduct is such as necessarily to excite his own disapprobation. Let external relations and circumstances be as flattering as heart could wish, if our unbridled passions precipitate us, or our carnal nature be induced to yield to indulgences which conscience pronounces criminal, with no other alloy to the flattering baits of sense, restless disquietude will be the result, which nothing but conscious innocence can ever allay. Universal experience goes to confirm the great Gospel truth, that vice and misery, as well as virtue and happiness, are in their very natures and tendencies inseparably joined. In human estimation, however, the latter is not even generally, much less

universally, attributed to the former. To the careless observer, happiness and misery are both often regarded as merely incidental, without any connection with appropriate causes. It is evident where this sentiment exists, the strongest incentive to virtue must be almost entirely paralyzed. And so likewise will be the considerations deterring from vice. But let it be asked, Can a man be happy who is annoyed with an abiding consciousness of his own meanness? Allow that his father and mother may praise him—that his wife and children may call him blessed—his brothers and sisters pronounce on him the very highest eulogies, in a word, that all men should speak well of him and heap upon him the finest encomiums, yet he himself knows—though no other being in heaven or earth but God may know—that he is not only undeserving such commendation, but constrained in his own feelings to condemn and reproach himself for the most shameful indulgences and moral destitution, though there may not be one voice to condemn but his own, and that uttered by the small still whisperings of conscience, it would vastly overpower the loud volleys of praise which might incessantly pour from all other voices.

There is, perhaps, no more certain tormentor

than conscious pusillanimity. No panegyrics, nor pleasures, nor plays, with all the boasted charms of wealth, can ever beguile its cutting remorse. It is a little damnation above ground, to be doomed to perpetual self-reproach and condemnation, and never to be able to look up, and feel, and say, *not guilty*. Is there any thing in the final punishment of the wicked, in the actual hell itself, which will lash more deeply with torment than "the worm that never dies." O how worse than baseless must be the hope of the hypocrite, whose only prospect is in covering, hiding, and smothering in his own bosom the very elements of the fire that is never to be quenched! "Happy is he, (and only he) that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth;" but blighting, and misery, and woe to him whose heart (or conscience) condemns him; for God is greater than he, and will condemn him also.

The text is an admonition to consistency, upon the principle that things indulged in are not compatible with what is adjudged to be right, or what may be allowed on other occasions. In discoursing farther on it, let us.

I. Make a few remarks on consistency.

II. Instance some cases in which it should, but does not appear.

III. Endeavor to show how to be consistent and maintain it.

IV. The great importance of it.

V. The wretchedness of being destitute of it.

Consistency we understand to be not only the general harmony and agreement, but the mutually contributing tendency and influence of all the parts of a thing to one leading design and object. Whether the thing be a character, an enterprise, a system, or what not, it includes a unity of purpose, and also of co-operation or movement, tending altogether to one common result, without any disagreement, opposition, or incompatibility of different parts. If a system of theology, its soundness may be tested by the harmonious arrangement and agreement of all its parts, both with themselves and with the general design of the system; the inconvenience or hideousness in one part being entirely irreconcilable with another, (and each vital or very prominent part) is manifest to every one, and speaks loudly against the claims of such a system for accuracy and soundness. That things may be very profound, and even mysterious, and yet by no means contradictory or incompatible, will not be disputed. Where opposition of meaning can be detected, we may be sure that all is not right;

but mere profounds, which we cannot fathom, or sublimities, which we cannot scan, are not to be reckoned in this way, but rather as proofs of the superior origin of the system.

In Christianity there are great, yet glorious mysteries, which the most sagacious can never, never comprehend; yet there is nothing in the fact of the existence of the mystery, or in any way connected with it, in the least incongruous with what is plain and comprehensive. To teach that things may and do exist in religion manifestly irreconcilable with each other, we regard as pernicious, and to be detested. There are some things which cannot be comprehended, because of their refulgent brightness; others because of their absolute darkness. We cannot be too careful in distinguishing between the mysteries of righteousness and the mysteries of iniquity. There is something in man, which we cannot well define, by which he is disposed to receive any thing as of heavenly origin, merely because of the inscrutableness and sublimity connected with it; and on this account he is liable to great imposition.

Some even contend that consistency and harmony of parts is not to be looked for in a system of which God is the author; classing all heights

and depths, and mere incomprehensibilities, with things absolutely incompatible with and contradictory to each other. It is positively foolish to argue that, because a thing is mysterious, it is therefore of Divine authority. Perhaps by such theology the multitude have been more frequently and more effectually duped than in any other way. Only let the standard of religious accuracy be the amount of mystery and sublimity thrown about religious formulas, and every one can see the abject exposure of the less informed, who are always the large majority, to the ingenuity and craft of the more instructed. It is not only silly old women who denominate men great preachers, or profound theologians because of the supposed depth or incomprehensibility of their discourses—when in truth the secret of the whole matter was a want of Divine simplicity and clearness, and instead thereof, a labored effort to heap together a heterogeneous mass of incoherent, far-fetched, rare, irreconcilable stuff, which was never designed to fit or feed an honest mind—but esquires, doctors, lawyers, colonels, and other distinguished ones of the gentry classes, who often attend to religion more from mere motives of policy, interest, or some other selfish feeling, rather than

from a sincere determination to know and practice its principles and duties, and to consecrate themselves and their whole estates, resources, and energies to the illustration and propagation of its great truths, principles, and institutions. Even these often look upon that as the best theology, and him as the greatest preacher, who deals most in paradoxical sublimities and things hard to be understood, with abundant references to antiquities and ancient authors, whose writings, it is believed by some, have been so interpolated and corrupted as to render them of very doubtful authenticity or accuracy. Yet with a great parade of antiquity and inscrutable sublimity, even some persons of tolerably grave and sober thought are carried away captive.

Of a sound system, no one part will be irreconcilable with the other parts. If out of twenty items, composing the whole, only two of them be comprehended, we may be sure that all the rest will be compatible with these; and every one may be expected to establish and give mutual support and strength to the other. Though strict justice may be regarded, at first view, as inconsistent with mercy and compassion; yet both are equally brilliant perfections of God's nature; and both are so inseparably connected

with the Gospel, and with all the developments of God's nature and will, as to render it extremely difficult to determine whether the justice or the mercy shines most resplendently, or which gives the most luster and grandeur to the scheme; while it is evident that its glory would all depart by the absence of either, each giving mutual luster to the other. The same may be said of every thing pertaining to God or his devices. To consider the absolute sovereignty of God alone, and unconnected with his matchless condescension and love, we must regard him as a consuming fire; but to think of him as a sovereign of infinite compassion, humility and kindness, at once the awfully terrible and sternly forbidding Majesty becomes infinitely lovely and desirable; so in his Gospel, all extremes are neutralized, and order and harmony are brought out of confusion and excess, which sin had caused.

II. We will now proceed to point out some cases in which we are liable to Inconsistencies. As no fallible mortal is exempt from them, it becomes more imperatively our duty to seek to know the times, places and circumstances where we shall be most exposed.

However incredulous it may seem, we think

there is no more frequent inconsistency, than for people to profess and not practice religion. In profession we not only declare our intention, but most solemnly vow, that we will practice it. What is baptism, and what is the sacrament, but a solemn vow and renewal of it, to be humble, and true, and faithful to our blessed Saviour in all things? Would we not regard, with utter contempt, the man who would seek the place of a soldier and would not fight, of a laborer who will not work, a learner who will not study, a traveler who will not proceed? Professing religion is but expressing an intention, a wish, a desire to practice it, and taking upon us the most solemn obligations to do so. Without the practice, profession is the most empty, hollow sound of a tinkling cymbal; it is faithlessness to the most solemn engagements. Profession is a solemn promise to God, to the church and to the world, that we will, to the utmost of our abilities, practice religion, by doing our best to promote the cause of Christ. To pretend to have light and insist on occupying the place of a luminary, and yet the very "light that is in us be darkness, how great is that darkness;" and how provokingly contemptible does such an one render himself. In these days of sectarianism

and undue solicitude about numbers in the rival denominations of the day, we might calculate that the principles and terms of discipleship would fail to be explained and enforced with becoming strictness. It is to be feared that the responsibilities and privileges of the Christian profession are assumed by many very inconsiderately, with but little effort to understand what they do. Most regard it as no more than a public expression of a belief that the Gospel is true, and its privileges free for all; others a belief that they are born of God and are the children of God. Some regard a profession as an expression of entire surrender to God, not in the sense of becoming an obedient servant, but rather that the Lord would do every thing, and let them be excused from self-denial, cross-bearing, and the arduous work of constant obedience to Gospel teaching. Some make a profession of religion to mean a most important disclosure of something of a most invaluable nature, possessed by them, of which others were uninformed, which is to secure to them a place in the affections and promises of God, and give them a standing with Christians and a right to all their privileges. The idea of occupying the place of a gratuitous beneficiary of the most invaluable stores of good,

with scarcely any view to performing the duties of a soldier, a laborer, or a self-denying cross-bearer—one who had just entered the list of conflict and toil, and made a consecration of himself, his talents, his influence, his wealth, with all his other available means for the conversion of the world—which is and must be the appropriate object of every Christian's labor—to profess religion and not be a missionary in heart and in effort, does seem very incompatible. The idea and purpose of falling immediately into the ranks of active operators, should always be entertained by the professor of the Christian religion; the idea of a bare enrollment of our names in the catalogue of mere beneficiaries of blessings already provided, is certainly a very scanty conception of the blessings we might enjoy, and of our obligations to our divine Master. And as our sentiments help to make up our characters, which exert a corresponding influence on our practice, may we not attribute to such groveling views of a Christian profession, much of the slothfulness, covetousness, pride, and lack of zeal and energy in the cause of Christ, by so many professing godliness?

Whether persons thus poorly qualified for membership in the church, could not serve their

own interests and that of the common cause to a better advantage without joining the church, is a question which deserves the most serious thought. For persons not possessed of vital godliness, to be not only allowed, but urged to the most intimate familiarity with sacred things and privileges, has at least something of the appearance of profanity, and might almost insensibly tend to obduracy and condemnation. In secular life it would induce ridicule from all quarters, for one to change his profession and not his practice; to take down his old sign and put up a new and prettier one, and still follow the same business. If we change masters, we ought to change work. To change from whigism to democracy in politics, and still advocate the establishment of a United States' Bank, a high protective tariff, and the distribution of the money arising from the sale of public lands, would be about as consistent as to profess religion, and still drive on after this world, and its interests and pleasures with the same unremitted zeal; still indulging the same worldliness, pride, and parsimony. Perhaps there is not a more comfortable couch on earth on which for a carnal mind to slumber with quietness, than to enjoy with approbation a place in the Church, with an able

minister pledged to vindicate his right to live there as long as he pleases, upon the bare profession of good desires. O that the time would soon come when we will readily know what men are, and what they are doing by their distinctive religious cognomen; when men shall be scrupulous to let their practice cover the whole ground of their profession. Such a happy time it is our privilege and duty to pray, to labor, and to look for. If Christians could only be induced to engage in the spirit for such a state, it need not be for distant generations only to enjoy it.

Another respect in which men in all situations are liable to very censurable incongruities, is saying and not doing; like the Scribes and Pharisees, who bound heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and laid them on men's shoulders; but they themselves would not move them with one of their fingers. Men thus act, because it is so much easier to say than to do, to order than to execute. Promises by many are reckoned cheap things; hence men are induced to give so much higher prices on time than in prompt pay; and to be very liberal in words, but in deeds close as coveteousness itself.

From time immemorial men have studied to find out cheap and easy ways to serve God,

where it would cost them but little; and that be paid in an easy way. Anciently this class would attempt to offer in sacrifice the lame, and such as were of little worth. More recently, instead of the trouble of a worthless sacrifice, conscience is quieted by good desires, wishes, promises, and precepts. Almost every one holds himself ready to tell his neighbor what to do in the way of his duty, but all the time neglecting his own. It seems less difficult to induce men to do every thing else for religion, than the very thing they ought to do, and without which every thing else they do, or attempt to do, must be to little purpose while this is neglected, which is simply to live for religion. Men will vindicate religion, they will pray for it, preach and teach it, admire and eulogize it, legislate for it, give their money for it, fight for it, and even die for it; and yet, strange incongruity, they will not live for it; convinced, too, that every thing will be unavailing, unless they do live for it. Such is the power of selfishness, that it dethrones reason, bribes judgment, warps conscience and makes it her most menial creature, puts out both eyes of the understanding, corrupts the will, sensualizest he affections, infuses vilest treachery into the memory, and basely

prostitutes and enslaves every power of both soul and body; exercising over them such an unhallowed dominion as to direct their energies to be exhausted in enterprises entirely foreign to their appropriate work, which is to evangelize and fill the whole earth with the glory of God.

The world would soon be converted, if no more was needful to it than well arranged plans and wise and wholesome precepts. Of these the Church has been fruitful, while practice and example have been very much wanting. For deliberative bodies concoct, digest, and heartily recommend schemes of benevolent enterprise, which they could, but would not execute, because of selfishness and criminal distrust of kind Providence, argues—and in the mildest figures the deduction can be drawn—a most shameful inconsistency. Such performances, however much parade of assembly and parliamentary etiquette may accompany them, are but little more than ostentation and vain show of good works. Precept, to be sure, is good; with example it is powerful, without, it is feeble.

In close connection with the foregoing, is that glaring inconsistency labored at by so very many, of attempting to serve God and mammon; or to follow Christ, and yet pursue the world

and its fashions. Certain it is, that the spirit of the world and the spirit of Christ are entirely incompatible; as much so as the objects proposed to be accomplished by each. Hence we might conclude that the work was very different; and that it would not only be somewhat inconvenient, but absolutely impossible to serve both; as well might we try to serve God and the devil, or to be citizens and subjects of two governments at the same time, or to travel east and west simultaneously. In serving one, we pursue a course directly opposite to that pursued in the service of the other; yet poor stupid men will profess to serve God, while it is evident they are serving the world with all their might. This can only be attributed to the most consummate ignorance of what the service of God consists, a subject on which it is of the most profound importance that we be well instructed. Blindness here is certainly very dangerous to the acceptableness of all that we do in religion. Many people call it attending Divine service, to flaunt out in their finery on the sacred Sabbath, to see and be seen, and on returning recollect more of almost every thing else than the sermon; and yet claim credit for having been engaged in Divine service, when, perhaps, proper-

ly criticised, the entire exercise, so far as they were concerned, was only serving self, or mammon. This might be very far short of even the form of worship, while the form might be attended with most scrupulous sanctity, and yet for the want of power, be worse than vain. Men have often been induced to fight to the very death for forms, under the influence of the very same spirit and feelings which would prompt them to go to as great lengths in opposition to the life and power of religion; and this not only in the dominions of the beast, but in the boasted territories of light. It is not certain but that some would die rather than relinquish some things which they would not contend were certainly and clearly taught in God's word. To serve God includes sincere and intelligent homage to his Divine character, in all its relations and perfections, together with a contribution of all our influence and means to the accomplishment of his great designs, in all respects where he has made known his intention to employ human instrumentality. Now if we but look for a moment at the work assigned us, and from which there is no release until it be accomplished, we will see clearly that our whole time and energies, be they ever so abundant, are de-

manded in the work, and that there is no time nor resources left to serve another. To serve God constantly does not imply, as some seem to think, a neglect of ourselves or families; but the very best kind of attention to them and their interests. It does not imply indolence or idleness in the matters of our avocation: but a most faithful attention to them, prompted, however, not by the sordid motives which control the worldling, but by motives drawn from the skies, full of benevolence and heavenly incentives. Surely, love to God, with a burning desire to do his will and further his purposes, can constitute as powerful a motive to propel human actions as the love of wealth or fame. Neither does an entire and unreserved consecration of all our possessions to the Divine service render them the less, but, in truth, the more available as means of comfort and support for ourselves and families; because it brings them under better regulations, and subjects them to a more productive and salutary discipline, and throws around them the very best indemnities for their preservation, increase, and extended enjoyment. A true and understanding consecration of one's estate to God, does not mean a random, indiscriminate disbursement of it to the first object

that may claim its use, nor to be forthwith merged into any benevolent common stock fund, held more immediately subject to the demands of the great cause of Almighty God and the woes of humanity. Nor does it imply, but in a very partial sense, that we relinquish the control and management of it into other hands; but rather, that as faithful stewards, we exercise it as a capital or as implements of labor in our unremitted efforts to accomplish our Master's work. As wealth is power, let the power it gives be conscientiously employed, not to selfish but benevolent purposes; endeavoring in all our movements to subserve the grand purposes of our great Creator.

Even to desire to live is very inconsistent with the almost incessant complaints of hardships and difficulties uttered by human beings, especially those who have been fully taught, and should have learned, long ago, that human life is "full of trouble." There is nothing upon which human beings should more certainly count, than disappointments and grievous toil all the days of their earthly pilgrimage. There is, perhaps, no greater folly than to seek exemption from sorrow in this vale of tears. Notwithstanding the thousands who have been foil-

ed and ingloriously failed in their efforts to seek pleasure in this life, yet men will be so credulous to the tales of fancy, and so deaf to the thousands of warning voices, as still to be influenced to peril not only their earthly, but their eternal all, in the most hazzardous adventure. Why should we expect happiness in life? All admit that it is not because we deserve it. On the contrary, if we were to receive our desert, it would be sorrow, and that continually. It is not that the world has it to give; for many have tried it, and found, to their sorrow, that this world is all a glittering show—its pleasures, so called, its honors, its wealth, and its friendships—are all proved by millions of dying witnesses to be short-lived, vain, utterly unsubstantial, and empty; by no means competent to fill up the expectations they excite. Yet such is the infatuation of deluded mortals, that they pursue them with almost the eagerness due to solid realities; and though they are almost continually warned of their deceptiveness, will complain most bitterly of their sad disappointment in not realizing in the actual possession of the delusive object of their toil, even as much that deserves to be called comfort as they had in the most laborious pursuit, when hard fare and hard labor was their daily portion.

There is perhaps nothing more illusory than a worldling's fanciful visions of earthly bliss; thousands drive for it with all possible impetuosity—in all the dreams of a wild imagination, and all the bright bubbles of airy speculation within the whole wide range of busy thought; and at last, after every edge is made to cut, every stone turned, every effort made, when soul and body are fatigued and exhausted in the labor, hope of success is reluctantly relinquished, desire fails, nature sinks, and in the last gloomy whispers of the dying bed, they are constrained to mutter the honest testimony to weeping, yet still deluded friends—*there is no happiness to be found in earth.* The possession of all the good things and flattering honors the world affords, comes infinitely short of filling the enlarged desires of the capacious soul. Even with all the comforts which religion itself promises in this life, we are still left hungering and thirsting after righteousness, of the which, though we may as we should, enjoy a perpetual increase, yet the more we realize, it but refines our sympathies, quickens our benevolent solicitude for others' good, and fits us more to bear the heavier burden of others' woes, rather than to feel our own the less. Even the very consummation of earth-

ly bliss is the joy of weeping. Perhaps the weeping Prophet never felt happier in the earth than when he cried, "O that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughters of thy people." So with all that religion proposes for us in earth, we are still inconsistent in expecting exemption from sorrow.

Another glaring inconsistency of poor blinded mortals is, to think of having any thing accomplished by prayer, without the appropriate labor. Such evidently misconceive both the nature and design of prayer. It is proof of both blindness and consummate delusion, to suppose that, by our importunities, we could call into exercise divine or even angelic energies, through any other instrumentality than ourselves. A more disastrous error could not well be indulged. If prayer be looked on as a work of obedience, the performance of which gives quietness to our consciences that we have done a good work, its influence will be truly paralyzing to all our powers. Let the subject of our prayer be what it may, for personal sanctification or for the world's conversion, and if we conclude that the prayer is doing a little towards it, so as to make us do one jot the less in other ways, or make us

feel one tittle the more contented or reconciled to its remaining undone, then it is certain that our prayer has become a snare and source of deception to us; and to get the habit of being satisfied with ourselves, that we have barely prayed for things, and they remain unaccomplished, it is doubtless proof that our very prayer has become to us an accursed thing, and the habit rather the quieter of a guilty conscience, than a medium of justification.

Every privilege and means of grace, in proportion to the greatness of its importance, is liable to become a great snare. As prayer, in this respect, is of invaluable moment, the abuse of it must bring a most unhappy result; perhaps there is no easier road to confirmed and insensible pharisaic hypocrisy. If an unworthy partaking of the Lord's Supper be to our great condemnation, may we not conclude that an unworthy exercise in the form of prayer, will also result in censure and scandal? If the main design of prayer be to quicken our energies and excite us to diligence in the great work of God, it must be a most awful perversion of it, to employ it to the very reverse. Prayer certainly implies that we are and intend to be found doing our very best in the accomplishment of the ob-

ject for which we implore assistance. If mere prayers could feed the hungry, clothe the naked, relieve the oppressed, and aid the importunate, there would be comparatively no ground to charge with inhumanity many who now have to bear the reproach. Prayer is the offering up the desires of the heart to God, in the name of Christ, for things agreeable to his will. If the desire have about it a sufficiency of fervency to constitute it properly a desire, that feeling, we think, will be sure to excite attention to all the means in our power which would be likely to accomplish the desire. The sentiment in the fable, of engaging with all your might for extrication, and then cry for help, we regard as not unbecoming the subject in hand. In this way, we not only prove our own insufficiency, but are more likely to have our desires granted. Certainly, it would be very highly inconsistent, while invested by kind Providence with capacity or means to accomplish any desirable object, that we should husband these resources for carnal or selfish uses, and yet call loudly and fervently on the Lord to accomplish such objects for us.

There is another case of gross inconsistency, which many indulge, on the subject of the rela-

tion between master and servant. It is admitted to be founded in iniquity, and perpetuated by impolicy by those who partake of it, apparently without scruples. This is a subject which it has been thought should be spoken of with great caution and delicacy, because of the attitude in which this topic stands to the amity and harmoniously kind feeling of the American people, and of its bearing upon the quiet of our country. It is not our purpose, in the very cursory manner in which we propose to notice it here, to excite dissatisfaction or provoke opposition from any quarter. Believing that many have been hurried, by even a superficial notice of the great abuse of it, to the conclusion that it was founded in inhumanity and wrong, without giving scarcely a second thought to the subject, who, perhaps, by a little investigation and thought, might apprehend it in quite a different aspect, we are not unapprised that persons expressing our sentiments on this subject, are apt to be charged with being governed by interested motives of some kind, if not by fouler considerations. If we thought that averments of other feelings in this respect would be at all availing, we would feel entirely warranted in offering them. We know that much has been very

gravely said against the existence of the relation of master and servant, as it exists in the order of society recognized in the United States of America, and sanctioned by its polity. It does seem to us that there are very clearly two sides to the question of involuntary servitude, and that the right side of this, as well as of much inferior questions, is, incalculably, the most desirable. We hear some, when their peculiarities are like to suffer by it, contend that controversy is very unprofitable, if not irreligious; but let the probable order of results be changed, and anon controversy elicits investigation, stimulates to improvement, and has very many happy effects not before apprehended. The only correct rule by which to determine this, as well as all other matters of both faith and practice, is the Holy Bible. If we speak not according to it, it is because there is no light in us. We think our brethren act strangely inconsistent, who admit that involuntary servitude is contrary to the law of God, that it is a great national curse, that it contravenes every principle of humanity and benevolence, that sooner or later we may certainly look for the most severe judgments of the Lord visited upon us on account of it, and yet not only practice it themselves, but en-

deavor to make all possible arrangements in their life-time, by which their children after them may go more largely into it, and even in their last wills and testaments make provision by which it shall be perpetuated by their great grand children. To convict such of the very grossest incongruity, it is not important to establish either side of the question. If their admissions be unjust and untrue, it is surely very wrong to make them, in every view that can be taken of the course. It is probable that many have got in the habit of making such admissions without proper reflection, from mistaken motives of pacification to a clamorous opposition, without ever pretending an investigation of the subject. It has been noticed very cautiously, because both American statesmen and theologians have looked upon it as a topic of very sacred interest, and may have felt somewhat deterred by the bold and rather menacing stand taken by the citizens of other countries on this subject, perhaps more from motives of civil policy than any thing else, being most of them dignitaries who occupy high places in civil society, and claim not much less submission from their subjects of the humbler grades than an American master does of his servants; though the policy may be very different,

the servility is thought to be none the less, in very many respects.

Various causes have conspired to obtain those large concessions from many whose practices speak so very loudly an opposing sentiment. Persons of so little consideration should no more be relied on as authority on either side; than those who are carried by the tide of popular huzza or controlled by the excitement of virulent passions. We can scarcely avoid the conclusion, that these admissions result either from very criminal want of reflection, from weakness or wickedness. It seems more than singular that a pious person, under ordinary influences, could be involved in so glaring and habitual an inconsistency, as is manifest in the concession and course of conduct we complain of. If the former be correct and proper, it would surely indicate a most alarming and incredible amount of blindness, perverseness and Heaven-daring wickedness, to allow the latter. Surely, men claiming to be enlightened and regenerated, will not justify themselves in such a course, and quiet their consciences with the poor evasions, that it has become sanctified by custom, (as though any other crime might not as properly as this be sanctified by custom,) and that it cannot be help-

ed, when it is abundantly manifest that they themselves are making no efforts, and perfectly indifferent whether others make any, to effect a remedy. Not only a few times have we met with persons who would utter the deepest lamentations over this subject, with sighs and groans, indicating the most bitter mental affliction on this behalf, expressing the greatest anxiety to be released from any connection with it, and most sadly regretting that the laws of the country, in such cases made and provided, had greatly, to their grief and dislike, rendered it unlawful to set their servants free, and on that account they were compelled to endure a very large amount of most painful anxiety. But when, for their relief, we have endeavored to do them a kindness, by suggesting a plan by which they could constitutionally rid themselves of the cause of their apparent distress, without being left involved in any peculiar responsibilities—by just taking the servant to a free State, and there let him be required or hired by the owner to work even a short time, when, by the natural operation of law, the servant becomes free, and there is no responsibility any where—the manifestations of disquietude at such suggestions have been most ridiculously evident, with all manner of turning,

shifting, equivocating, retracting, and little dissimulating; so as to show, without any defalcation, that the human "heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." And not unfrequently, after a few turns in the conversation, the poor mortal becomes not only an advocate of the thing, but a zealous justifier of many of its abuses; and after a large amount of deceitful remark about the comparative hardships of master and servant, and of the almost entire impracticability of the servant's being able to sustain himself any where in the wide world without his meager allowance of meat and corn, which has been so long measured to him by an inhuman driver, who cares but little more for his comfort than he does for his ox, only as their pecuniary value is disproportionate, when we come to cast up and throw the man's sentiments into as concise and expressible an aggregate as possible, the substance of the whole is, that if nothing else can be done, by which he can be justified in holding on, and every body else will first let theirs go, then if the man in the moon or Uncle Sam, or somebody else equally responsible, would make him entirely safe, with the most ample securities for an amount not more than fifty per cent. above what the servants

would command in the best market, and some one to be relied on will guaranty, without troubling the poor owner, to have them comfortably settled in some elysian land, with many other conditions entirely too tedious to mention, he would, reserving some for family use, be willing to let them go, if his wife was willing, adding that many of them came by his wife, and she having been always used to them he had no thought she would be willing, and it was a source of most thrilling distress and mortification to him.

There are some who resort in defense, against the charge of inconsistency, to the flattering subterfuge that it is a national sin, and hence not properly chargeable to individuals. To say the least of this shift, it argues a most entire destitution of patriotism; and if it be an insidious resort to make the nation an irresponsible scape-goat of our sins, such a course deserves both the penal retributions of the country's laws, as well as the moral rebuke of its frowns. If this view of the subject affords any consolation at all, it can only be such as consists, with the most reckless indifference, about the nation's honor, and an acknowledgment of her guilt and degradation: for while "righteousness exalteth a nation, sin is a reproach to any people." The

sin of a nation, doubtless, consists only in the wickedness of the inhabitants, or a portion of them. If the rulers do wrong, or the law makers act amiss, though the results may fall on the whole people, yet surely, in the eyes of the King of kings and God of the whole earth, guilt will attach to those who persisted in the deed, as it cannot be supposed to attach to those who opposed it. In the case in hand, therefore, if it be confessed to be a national sin, surely the guilt of it cannot be expected to attach equally to those whose example and influence went against it, as to those who both practiced and advocated it.

The question for every one to settle is, Is it right, or is it wrong? They who acknowledge it to be wrong, permit me to exhort them to take heed to themselves, and trifle not with their consciences, but remember that he only can be happy who condemneth not "himself in that thing which he alloweth;" and "if our consciences condemn us, God is greater than our consciences and will condemn us also." That involuntary servitude belongs to the order of society that God has established, we think the Bible clearly teaches, and this we will endeavor to show, as well as we can, in the short space allowed us here. We shall take a very little room to say

some things, at least, on the highly criminal abuse of it—which stands like massy bulwarks in the way of obtaining a fair hearing with the great mass of the community on this subject, and which has done more, no doubt, to provoke, perpetuate, and render opposition harrassing and formidable, than all other considerations combined. Even many who entertain our sentiments, have been intimidated in ascertaining and vindicating them, almost entirely by considerations connected with the abuse; for the thing, as carried on by some people, is not the thing recognized, approved, and advocated by our civil and religious institution, but the one which they desire and labor to reform, much more ardently than could be expected of the most conscientious of the opposition: among whom there are, no doubt, very devotedly honest, pious, and patriotic, yet mistaken and impulsive men, who, like men in all other department of human affairs, under the influence of motives worthy the noblest cause, are liable to err, and be carried great lengths in unbecoming causes; for their indiscretions, we find very large and weighty palliatives in the inhuman abuses which have sometimes been practiced, in the most flagrant violation of the authority and spirit of this relation;

in the denunciation of which, those who advocate it would unite with its opponents in terms as pointed and severe as they possibly could. That the institution of American servitude should be charged with all the abuses and infelicities that have been connected with it, we think is no more just than that other relations in society—especially other forms of the relation of master and servants, such as our opponents would approve—should be charged with the abuses and cruelties connected with them.

We have no question but that on this, as well as on subjects of graver moments, good men do conscientiously and sentimentally differ, and are disposed dispassionately to contemplate it with equal fairness and candor on both sides, and in all its aspects. We regard it as an aspersion, rather than an expression of a justifiable conclusion, that this subject is canvassed only by prejudiced and inflammatory persons. It would be equally discreditable to us, either as a united and harmonious or a discordant people, to think there were none on either side disposed to think and inquire charitably and calmly, and with a sincere wish to arrive at the true and proper position on this question, vexed and intricate as it may be considered. And should our citizens

not harmonize in sentiment and practice on this subject, it does not hence follow that political destruction or perpetual discord must be necessary consequences. Want of agreement in this matter has existed for a series of years, all the time cotemporary with the most cordial amity, unity, and good will among our citizens; and there certainly is nothing absolutely to forbid an indefinite perpetuity of that happy state of things. Under the auspices of no kinder Providence than it is our privilege to look to, and to rely upon, our fathers of the North and South lived and loved in the enjoyment of the sweetest unity, prosperity, and peace. We think it is not best to apprehend the gloomiest possible results, when we have so very many more reasons for expecting better things.

We should have confidence in our brethren, that they will love us; and while we mutually watch most scrutinously over each other, let it not be in disguise, but openly, and for each other's good, that mutual benefit and safety may crown our care. With these feelings we speak freely and frankly our reasons for embracing and defending the system of servitude observed in the United States of America.

Involuntary servitude has existed in various

forms, and amongst all nations, in all periods of the world's history. It is very remarkable that it has never existed under such wholesome restrictions, and the very peculiar modification of its moral, equitable and reasonable bearings on the parties, in which there was so much authority given to secure the community against irruptions and rebellion, and so many rights reserved as to guard against inhumanity and oppression. In most instances where involuntary servitude has existed, the power of the master has been so unlimited and arbitrary as utterly to deny, at his pleasure, to the servant, in any form, the privileges of the Sabbath or sanctuary, or the common necessities of life, and put even the life of the servant at the irresponsible will of the master, in which, for starving to death or in any other way destroying his life, or the infliction of any kind of inhuman torment, the master was not punishable; with many other things, no less shocking to humanity, and even more so to chastity and honor. In these respects, the incalculably preferable regulations of our country are known to all.

That there are no improvements, both desirable and practicable in the order of our society, especially in the principles of its subordinate

relations, we do not pretend; but hope under the direction of a gracious Providence, to be enabled so to improve in our social relations that the master will more cheerfully and amply render to the servant that which is just and equal; and that the servant will be disposed to render a more willing obedience to his master; not with eye service only, or from servile fear, but from the heart, with a cordial approval of the propriety of the relation, and with sincere fidelity to the interests of the master; and when every thing connected with the whole affair, both masters and servants, with the rules and principles by which they are governed, shall approximate nearer to the spirit and principles of our great grand Master in Heaven—to whom all are infinitely subordinate; in the perfection of whose sovereign rule, though there be in his government thrones, dominions and angels, and perhaps an incalculable chain of subordinations, down to door keeper in his glorious house above, where all shall sweetly fraternize, and all be actuated by the one great principle of charity, and that from choice. We hope the time is not distant when masters will learn how to appreciate the moral and intellectual, as well as the mere physical capacity of servants; that the suitable stim-

ulants to improvement, fidelity and usefulness shall be brought properly to bear upon their wasting energies; that the station of a servant shall no more be regarded as synonymous with infamy and disgrace, but elevated to a position where reputation will be practicable, and character of some value. Such improvements are not only compatible, in our apprehension, with the whole subject, but very highly so with the best interest of the master and the present and future happiness of the servant; about which for a master to feel no interest, it might properly be a question whether he should be eligible to the privilege of owning a servant.

We have no question but there might be profitably given to this subject some human legislation, by which the rights of the master would be more permanently secured, the condition of the servant very greatly improved, and the clamor of opposition greatly allayed, at least so far as to obviate that reproachful crimination which has been so uncharitably indulged by the opposition against their brethren and fellow citizens, which can but be regarded as unkind and unwarranted. 1. Because the same charges may be made against the venerable Patriarchs, the holy Prophets, and pious men of all periods of

the history of the world and of the Church. If those men, who all admit must have had more immediate and unerring intercourse with the Fountain of rectitude, felt that it was their privilege to be the owners of servants, who were bought from the heathen round about them, and to hold them as servants for life, and leave them as an inheritance to their children after them, may we not conclude that the practice was with the concurrent will and direction of Almighty God, seeing that his divine supervision of the affairs and movements of those men was very peculiarly direct and comprehensive; and without controversy, the same principle must have been involved in the relation which then existed between master and servant as is involved in the relation that now exists between American masters and their servants; so that if these be properly faulted, those could not be innocent. And if there be any thing in the constitution and polity of the United States, in relation to this subject, which deserves to be considered pernicious and unwholesome, in what light should we consider the Divine regulations, enacted by Jehovah himself, for the observance of his own people, about the purity of whose principles and practices in all things there was manifestly

a very special Divine solicitude; wherein, after particular regulations concerning the bondage of their brethren who may wax poor, and their privilege of being redeemed by their friends, or going free at certain festivals if they chose, or give testimony of their preference to remain in bondage, by having their ears bored, concerning the introduction of servants from other nations, it is enacted in Leviticus xxv. 44, "Both thy bond-men and thy bond-maids, which thou shalt have, shalt be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bond-men and bond-maids. Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bond men forever."

Criticisms on this passage have been various and numerous. Many try to make it allude to those made servants of the children of Israel, and make it only a periodical servitude; but we think any impartial mind, to read the whole book or chapter, will see that it means—and cannot mean any thing else—that God permitted his

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people anciently to buy of the heathens, men and women, to make servants of them, to be their possession or property, and to be left as an inheritance to their children. And this view we understand to be corroborated by many Old Testament writers, and also to be recognized and approved by the New. If this be settled upon as the obvious teaching of the Holy Bible, in any part of it, the controversy ought to be considered at an end: for certain it is, that what is taught in one place in the Bible, is not contradicted in another. It avails the objector to involuntary servitude nothing, to argue that this regulation belonged to another age and dispensation of things; it matters not when or where it existed, it teaches the principle that constitutes the relation between American masters and their servants, which, if it was then proper, we cannot see why the principle is not sound and wholesome still. We do not conceive that there is any thing so very different in the people or circumstances of that and the present period, to give so entire an opposition to the moral aspect of the very same practice, when we have no account of any repeal or alteration of the law by which the practice is directed.

2. It may be contended that the economy, of

which the cited law is a part, has been done away or superseded by a more perfect system. Upon that admission, it would not follow that every thing connected with that system was wrong, or that all its items are dispensed with: -things that cannot be shaken, or shown to be improper or inexpedient, it would seem right to let remain. It is correctly argued, that infant membership in the church was established in a former dispensation, and that it is still in force, unless it can be shown to be repealed. So, if the relation of master and servant be established in a former dispensation, it is still in force, unless we can show a repeal of the law above cited, which establishes it. But is not the relation very evidently recognized by the moral law, which is admitted by all to have no variableness, or shadow of diminution, or modification in its requirements?

In the tenth commandment, where we are forbidden to covet the things which are our neighbor's, in connection with other things owned and possessed, and which we are forbid to covet, servants are mentioned, with the evident understanding that the servant was the property of the neighbor, as much as any possessions he might have. Does not the tenth commandmen

evidently recognize the absolute ownership of servants by the neighbor, as much as it does his title to any thing else he has? Would not the commandment itself be entirely nugatory, if it maintained that the servants were only hired ones? Might it not, with equal propriety, be contended, that the ox and the ass were hired, that his house and even his wife were possessed in the same way? which would be even more ridiculous than nugatory itself. Certainly we could not claim any great perspicuity for the writing which does not discriminate between owning and hireing a thing.

However contrary a thing might appear to our erring and very superficial conceptions of what ought to be, where the law of God—which is a most keen discerner of the thoughts and intentions—apprehends it, without any penal denunciations, surely the Gospel—which was not intended to supersede, or give any different modification to the law, but only to fulfill it, to magnify and honor it—would not regard as penal, what the law had apprehended without rebuke. It never was the design of the Gospel to furnish a rule of conduct. Obedience to it consists not so much in conformity to its injunctions, on account of any intrinsic rectitude involved in the

precept or duty itself. Repentance, faith, baptism, and prayer, for instance, which evidently are highly important gospel duties, do not enter—in the same prominent sense that they constitute gospel duties—into those great elementary principles of right, rectitude, and holiness, established by the moral law: that eternal and immutably perfect rule of propriety, adopted in the inscrutably wise and holy counsel of the great Founder of the Universe, to be the rule of conduct among all people, and at all periods.

It is not, therefore, by the gospel, but by the law that we have a knowledge of sin. In its place, the law is incalculably surviceable. So far from being abrogated or suspended by the Gospel, it is only the fact of its existence, and its being in full force and virtue, which makes the Gospel interesting as a remedial economy, to save from its fearful curse. If there be no law, there can be no guilt or condemnation, hence no use or appropriateness in having a system to redeem, to justify, and save from the curse of the law, which is the peculiar work of the Gospel. The law then being the great fountain of righteousness, and recognizing the existence of property or ownership of servants, we conclude that it cannot be founded in iniquity,

as some would vainly teach: the almost entire premises of whose reasoning are founded in the abuse of it, and generally of occurrences extremely rare, and such as one master in a million would not approve. By this course of fallacious sophistication, the nuptial, the parental, and almost every social relation, appointed for the wholesome government and comfort of the human family, might be shown to be founded in sin.

3. We are more confirmed in our convictions of the propriety of this relation, because the Gospel recognizes it as proper, and adapts its instructions and general teaching to society regulated after this order, without bringing the first charge against it. The appropriate duties of both master and servant are dwelt upon quite elaborately, where the privileges and mutual obligations of each are given in much more minute detail than in any former dispensation. Upon the supposition that the practice is contrary to the will of the Lord, and in view of the thorough, faithful and fearless manner in which our Lord and his Apostles reprov'd iniquity, expos'd hypocrisy, and charged home so very pointedly, crime, with all its deep, dark shades of turpitude, upon its guilty perpetrators, when our

Lord was giving the very last dispensation of his will to the world, it is impossible, upon any thing like reasonable principles, to account for his passing over a practice as prominent in the world in the days of his incarnation, as that of involuntary servitude, not only without rebuke, but evidently in such a way as to give it the authority of his sanction and approval. It is scarcely pretended that the Saviour forbade it; and as an apology for his not doing so, it is vainly urged that Christ came not to interrupt the order of society. This seems to be an assumption entirely gratuitous; certainly it cannot be fairly inferred from any thing either said or done by Christ or his Apostles. His errand into the world certainly was, in no unimportant part, to destroy the works of the devil; if he ever failed to reprove sin, or correct error, when it came under his notice, we have not observed it. It was not when he called the Scribes and Pharisees a generation of vipers, a wicked brood of wicked parents, who by their poisonous doctrines were working the ruin of immortal souls, who were evidently walking in the footsteps of their fathers; nor when he found the Jews in the temple, desecrating the house of God, and absolutely eating it up by a most constant adherence to

the way their fathers trod; he did not respect the ancient order of things on that occasion, but though it was a perfect blow-up of their operations, and must have excited the greatest consternation, he did not forbear, but made a scourge of small cords and drove them all out of the temple, charging them with the most unhallowed profanations of the house of God. It will not be disputed that interference with social or civil policy in families or nations will occasion less dissatisfaction, and be much less liable to provoke a rebellion and discord than to interrupt ecclesiastical or religious usages. Hence, we think the apology for the Saviour not placing his all-sufficient and withering veto upon this relation—leaving it for cavilers of the nineteenth century to utter great swelling speeches of vanity about, to menace governments, threaten the upturning and almost entire destruction of the affairs of Church and state with—cannot be sustained, but must fall, as a mere assumption, without ground or reason. To admit even the full extent of the assertion, it would do no more than weaken the authority for involuntary servitude; it would be no prohibition or repeal; it would only leave the thing where it was, based on the ancient authority of legal institutions,

unrepealed and uninterfered with in any way by the Saviour. But would not the concession be furnishing infidelity with a most wieldly war-club against Christianity, to allow that an institution so noted, and involving, as the opposition insist, so large an amount of sin and inhumanity, should be left without a rebuke from his lips — except in the doubtful construction of general precepts, such as, “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the Prophets;” which is, to be sure, a most excellent and comprehensive general precept, and of the very first importance in the general government of human manners, to which, in the absence of plain, positive precept, we refer innumerable cases of conscience that continually come up in the multifarious occurrences in human affairs. But surely this or any other general precept, with no more evident allusion to the subject in hand than this has, should not be so construed as to contravene the force and authority of such positive and direct precepts as Ephesians vi. 5—8, “Servants be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ. Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as

the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free." Titus iii. 9, "Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again. 1 Peter ii. 18, "Servants be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward."

From these passages, it is certainly evident that servants are bound to obey their masters; and as they are spoken of as "bond," may we not fairly conclude that they are that description of servants called in the Old Testament "bond-servants," who were bought of the heathen, held as a possession, and left as an inheritance to the children of their masters.

How can the views of opposers be reconciled with the following in 1 Timothy vi. 1, "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faith-

ful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise and consent not to the wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness; from such withdraw thyself." Here, by servants under the yoke, are evidently meant the description of bond servants above mentioned, in which the servant is bound to honor and serve his master with fidelity. In connection herewith, the master is elsewhere taught to render to his servant "that which is just and equal. Here the obedience is urged from respect to the name (or authority) of God, and to avoid blasphemous disrespect to his doctrine (or ordinance.) It does seem undeniable that the dictator of this epistle must have intended to enforce the relation of master and servant; and to assert its entire compatibility with piety and religion—the master and the servant are brethren. Apprehending that complaints would arise from the subordinate party, obedience is here urged from various con-

siderations. The regulation is declared a wholesome one, authorized by our Lord Jesus Christ, and according to godliness. Objectors to it must have regarded it as an involuntary servitude, and not as mere hired servants for stipulated wages; for it is not presumable that any would be so wantonly insurgent and contentious as to excite discontent and rebellion among those who had power to terminate their service at pleasure, and had an equal right with their masters to hire others, and be masters themselves when they please. To teach otherwise, and not submit to this wholesome order of society, evidently manifests great pride and ostentation of human liberty and equal dignity, deranging the order of society; and under the very plausible pretence of promoting freedom and universal emancipation, getting up a spirit of reckless libertinism alike unsubservient to intellectual and moral improvement as to civil and ecclesiastical soundness and good policy; exciting insubjection, strife, envy, evil surmisings, perverse disputings, with a host of concomitant evils, very subversive of social order and quiet, and extremely difficult to counteract and allay. Men of corrupt minds are apt to engage in this work—in babbling and scribbling, and most gravely doting

about questions of strifes of words; giving out primitive principles, roots and originals that never existed; making great swelling speechess on reformation, humanity and benevolence; perhaps almost "knowing nothing" as it should be known about the government, training and organization of poor, blind and refractory human nature, in that order which will most likely secure the greatest aggregate of intelligence, virtue, and happiness of the whole mass of society. There certainly ought to be no question but that the Bible, properly understood, does include that order of society, and that sort of discipline which will most infallibly and most highly contribute to the general good, averting the most evil, and subserving most felicitously the condition of our race in all respects.

If we could be convinced that our apprehensions of the Lord's order, as laid down in the Bible, did not thus result, we would certainly question the correctness of our interpretations. Neither does it conflict with the sentiment that God is no respecter of persons, any more than it may be supposed to be conflicted with in the establishment of other social relations in society. Is it not the voice of nature, as well as of nature's God, that for the greatest harmony and

general good, some are and must be subject to the rest. For each and every one, either in civil, social, or religious communities, to denounce the idea of subordination, as being only another word for misery, disgrace, and almost damnation itself, is calculated very effectually to occasion murmuring and discontent throughout the whole ranks of subordinate society. In like manner, to allow and teach that being a servant necessarily excludes from the essential means of ordinary human comfort; and that the whole system of involuntary servitude is founded in oppression, and blind, arbitrary misrule, in view of the unavoidable inequalities of men incident to the best state of society the world ever has or ever can be expected to enjoy, must always cause an infinite amount of disquietude; much more, we think, than would result from a settled system of wholesome subordination, such as exists in the United States; not as portrayed by its opposers, but in that mode and state of improvement contemplated in the institution taught by the Bible, and ardently desired by its friends. It is far from being illusory to calculate that society, organized after this mode, would secure an equal amount of what the world calls happiness to the most subordinate, as well as to the

most prominent ranks. The duties, cares, comforts, trials, and responsibilities are much more equally divided between master and servant than is usually supposed; and their chances for satisfaction and quiet by no means so disproportionate. While facilities for intelligence are acknowledged to be unequal, obligations to counsel and direct have manifestly a correspondent disproportion; and so in many other respect. If masters would in all things render to their servants what is just and equal, and in return, the servant perform with scrupulous fidelity the commands of his master, a wholesome reciprocity of advantage might clearly exist in this relation.

Instances of persons whose faith and piety have been highly commended by our blessed Saviour, with a knowledge of their owning servants, are utterly irreconcilable with the whole character and conduct of the Saviour, if the practice of owning servants be iniquitous and contrary to the will of Heaven. The Centurion, for example, whose great candor and deep sense of dependence and unworthiness, was highly calculated to invite admonition for a fault, and to afford assurances that it would be thankfully received and wisely appropriated, while the na-

ture of his intercourse was such as unavoidably to call attention to this subject; it rather seemed that the Centurion himself might have had his scruples on the subject, like many other good people, and looked for a rebuke from the blessed Saviour; but instead thereof, we hear him speak in terms of the highest commendation of him, saying that he had not seen so great faith in all Israel, without one word of correction, though the Centurion confessed himself the owner and commander of a servant. Other similar occurrences we might notice, and add to our reasons for involuntary servitude, if the limits of our discourse would properly allow. It is, however, our principal object at present to bring to view the glaring inconsistency of admitting this practice to be contrary to every thing that is right and proper, and yet indulge in it and give no attention whatever to inquire for, or put into operation a remedy for the evil acknowledged.

A few other respects in which we are liable to incongruities we must notice. The loud talk of some persons of their orthodoxy of sentiment and strength of faith, who are shamefully destitute of good works, amiable qualities or Christ-like temper. The truth is, that all other attempts to show our faith, without works, will be

utterly futile and incredible. All manner of assertion and proof to establish that a fountain is clear will be complete foolishness while the stream continues foul. Some acknowledge religion to be the most important of all concerns, yet give their whole time and energies to other pursuits. Some indulge in habitual indolence and improvidence, with the most wanton neglect of any reasonable means of acquiring a livelihood, and complain of want. Some swear, and allow themselves criminal indulgences, and at the same time chastise their children and servants for the same things. Others advocate temperance, and yet take a hundred times too much wine and brandy for their stomach's good, or family's good, or their country's good; and worse than all, to the injury of the precious cause of Christ more than a thousand such lives are worth. Some pronounce their own practices ungentlemanly, and yet take serious insult at being ungenteel or ill-bred. Some chew tobacco, and spit, and spatter over a yard square in the Church, so as to be a very serious annoyance to fellow worshipers, yet will chide their wives for smoking and snuffing; and last, though not least, some will strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.

Our third proposition is, to show how to main-

tain consistency, than which we have promised nothing so desirable. If we can be successful here it will be an invaluable favor done. Want of consistency is perhaps the most universal defect in human character. Most men have some good parts, and some good conduct; but the great incongruity of these with so very many other parts makes a truly hideous appearance. To some extent men may be right in the head, rotten at heart, and most dissolute in life. So some may have very clever, genteel, and to all outward appearance, even amiable conduct, yet be actuated in their movements alone by the promptings of a heart full of vilest avarice, and have not God in all their hearts, and in their theories given up to skepticism and downright infidelity; and yet by the most unremitted efforts to keep attention to the better parts, and to hiding and covering the deceptive ones, often pass through life with quite an enviable share of popular applause. But they must fail in commanding the cordial esteem of the most discerning and the approbation of their own consciences. The way to maintain consistency is surely desirable to every one, hence well worthy of labor and inquiry to ascertain.

Our first advice on this subject is to take

truth for your guide in all things, both of faith and practice. What truth is we leave entirely with the holy Bible to settle; believing that we can only be in possession of it in proportion as we have sought and embraced the pure meaning of that invaluable document. We should search the Scriptures most carefully and prayerfully for ourselves, and not leave it to others to draw inferences from them to govern our lives. The Christian world do not agree about the Bible and the Bible alone being the only infallible rule and ultimate arbiter in all matters of faith and practice; but the difference is entirely about what the Bible means. A book so abundant in parables, symbols, and figures, as all acknowledge the Bible to be, and treating on topics so profound and important, should certainly be studied and criticised with the greatest possible diligence, care and fidelity. Truth being one great, perfect and entire system, will be found always bearing to the same important ends, and most exactly harmonizing in all its parts; so that to follow it in any of its direct or legitimately reflected guidings, it will always be found maintaining the same things; and in no case will it be found countermanding at one time what at another it had authorized—teaching by its ordi-

nances what it contradicts in its precepts, by its penalties what is incompatible with its promises, or in any one department what does not most elegantly and justly harmonize with the whole together, or with each one of all the other parts. It is a most striking and convincing peculiarity of the holy Bible, that though its topics are so comprehensive, so sublime, and so various—consisting of history, biography, prophecy, narrative, theology, with preceptive and doctrinal proverbs, psalms, revelations, epistles, genealogy, law, legislation; and these treated of, so far as respects human instrumentality, by men of entirely various manners, countries, languages, accomplishments, and circumstances, from kings to humblest peasants; living at different periods hundreds of years remote from each other; being entirely uninformed of each other's peculiar condition, habits, or labor; often not knowing that another human being had ever written of the things which they wrote—and though, when all these things were gathered together, they would seem very likely, in human estimation, to present a most incoherent, incongruous, and heterogeneous mass of jumbled matter, yet they breathe the same things, shed the same light, manifestly emanating from the same com-

mon origin, and tending to the same grand results. Like the different stones of an arch, each contributes to the other's support, and is mutually dependent on and subservient to the other's design and usefulness, bearing up as the great keystone, TRUTH, the vicarious death of Jesus Christ our Lord, for the sins of the world, that by his stripes we might be healed. This view must convince every investigating mind that the Bible emanated from an infallible and omniscient source, and is therefore worthy of being a universal standard for all people. Follow what rule or institution, be governed by what doctrine or precept of the Bible you may, if rightly understood, there will be no danger of conflicting with any other parts of its teaching. Where special rules may not be found to guide in any proposed action, we cannot fail to find general ones of most comprehensive import. We are instructed to give attention to whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report, or "all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Matthew vii. 12. Thus guided, and having an honest desire to glorify God, and do justice to ourselves, a candid person cannot, but by the most criminal perversity, be entangled in incon-

sistencies; seeing that we have the infallible word of God as our rule, the Holy Ghost promised and sent to lead us into all truth, and bring to our remembrance and right apprehension the precious words, to be to us an infallible interpreter of sacred truth, and faithful prompter to obey its dictates. We are constrained to set to the account of human disloyalty in some way, all want of conformity to the will of the Lord, whether it be positive or negative; being warranted in the belief that, with the abundant helps so graciously provided, and so freely offered in the Gospel, every man might and ought to do every thing decently and in order.

4. We must next invite some attention to the very great importance of having unity and corresponding fitness in our general character and conduct. Want of pertinacity in these respects, has been a very extensive source of shame, inconvenience, and loss, to great numbers. Many, for the want of it, labor all their days to little purpose: one part of their work opposing another; so that, with the most incessant urging, pressing, and driving, in their business, there is no real progress: while one iron is being hammered, two are burning. A disproportion between backs and burdens, between means and

enterprise, has been to thousands a most fruitful source of laborious and vexatious toil, and led to most shameful failures, and often utter loss of both principles and peace. Want of fitness of means and measures to the ends proposed, has seldom failed to result in the serious disgrace and injury of the undertaker. Occurrences unforeseen may very practicably intervene to the frustration of the best matured projects, and render unsuccessful the best digested plans. This forms no insuperable objection to the guaranty afforded of success to the skillful and prudent, who lay their plans according to their means.

Consistency is important, that all the parts may give mutual aid and growth to each other. A man with most of his strength thrown into one member, we know, must lose his energy. So a vessel, with a few unexceptionable parts, and the rest inferior or worthless, must be of little use. A man with very many good parts and qualities, yet defective only in veracity or integrity, is, by that single defect, rendered uninteresting, if not absolutely worthless. Take a machine, sound and whole in all its parts but one, and that, though it may be a small one, yet, if irreparable, the whole must be noxious and

unprofitable. It is truly reproachful to be at very great expense in building a house of thick and well finished walls, to resist the pelting storm, and then have no doors to the building. To make a prosperous commencement of an enterprise, and fail, evidently for want of proper digestion of the plan, if not disgraceful, would at least be very mortifying to the undertaker. All this is to be avoided by studying and practicing consistency in all our movements.

In matters of religion, we often witness great want of system, and always a proportionable want of prosperity and success. Attending the means of grace only when it is convenient, without any rule to govern in the matter, will not likely result in much profit or edification.

Consistency is essential to a convenient and fair estimate of character. By the manifestation of a particular quality, or the performance of a special action, men are apt to make estimates of each other. Upon this principle we would be liable to egregious errors, where persons were not regularly built in their principles, or eccentric in their practices; but, for instance, when we see a man, properly and proportionably organized in the whole, make a contribution to any benevolent object, with a knowledge of his resources,

how the Lord prospers him, and the comparative claims of other objects, upon feelings of humanity, we may be able to make pretty correct calculation on him, and know how and where to count him. With proper uniformity of character, our familiar friends, at least, should be able to count us, and tell which way we would go, or what we would do, upon almost any supposition which might be made.

We trust the time is not remote, when the glory of God shall fill the earth, and men shall be so consecrated to God in their feelings, that when they profess religion, others, who know their circumstances, can calculate, as well as they, what they will do in the cause of foreign missions, or any other benevolent cause whose claims are defined. Consistency not only contributes to the success, but more especially to the ease and morality of our operations. He cannot claim the promise in the text, whose doings in some things conflict with and condemn other things in his conduct.

What may be termed mere intellectual or moral exuberance, utterly incorroborated by other faculties and qualities, are certainly sources of embarrassment and mortification, rather than useful powers and accomplishments. Sometimes

a very partial show of brilliancy might excite expectations which could not be met, or authorize claims that could not be complied with; which delinquencies would always involve a measure of shame and contempt.

Moreover, human character is rightly to be estimated, not so much by its better, but rather by its feebler attributes and powers; as it is only up to the capacity of these that any one can be relied upon as an actor or operator in any business: where farther confidence is reposed, disappointment will be the inevitable result.

In morals, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James ii. 10. Not guilty of actually offending in every point or precept of the law, but involved in the entire penalty of it: which, though it is composed of many precepts, has only one curse, which is fully incurred by the violation of any one of its rules. In estimating character, therefore, we should inevitably look at the more defective parts, and reduce the more brilliant and imposing ones to a level with these; then only we can form a reasonable estimate of the intrinsic worth and real usefulness of the person. Though there may be apprehensions of injustice in this rule, such fears should be

dissipated by the reflection, that, almost universally, the good parts are much more prominent, and more cheerfully exhibited, than the inferior ones, even in familiar acquaintance; because they are not always hanging out, we do not take them fairly into the account in our estimate.

Probably the correctness of our theory, in this respect, will be challenged by the inconsiderate. For the present, we will only ask them to read and study human nature a little more carefully and prayerfully, taking themselves as text books, and we rest assured we will soon be of one mind on the subject, and they will see the importance of having their characters well ordered and balanced in all things.

5. Finally, we notice the wretchedness of being destitute of consistency; and here, having greatly anticipated ourselves in former allusions, we can say but little more. We are convinced, however, that the full amount of inconvenience resulting from it has not been amply considered. We do think that scarcely any thing is more likely to subject us to fearful overthrows in any thing we may engage; because our resources and energies are first employed without properly considering that the weaker are destined to be tested in the progress. We often commence

operations under flattering auspices, and proceed encouragingly until the weak place developes itself. We may illustrate our idea, by noticing any of the common avocations of men, in their different departments. The merchant, for instance, who, in addition to the ordinary qualifications for such business—as intellectual sprightliness, good morals, good education, good capital, good friends, and good reputation—may have a very popular address, an unusually good talent to buy, to barter, to ship, to open, to show, and be a first rate salesman and fine book keeper, yet a miserably bad collector: which one single defect would evidently render all the investments in trade of little value, however indefatigably they may be employed; let the show of business be ever so great, it cannot profit the operator. It is not only desirable, but absolutely essential to success in business, that persons have consistency in it.

Persons may do very many good things in religion, and yet the most important things be regarded by them as of trivial moment, and hence left undone, and they miss of heaven on account of one defect. Many, instead of looking at Christianity as a great whole, which furnishes the only and entire character and out-fit for

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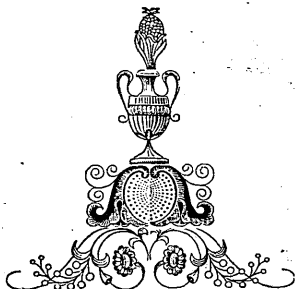
heaven, speak of it as one among other things, which go to make up the perfection of virtue and accomplishments in man. Such speak of their irreligious friends as very interesting and amiable, lacking nothing to complete their refinement but religion; as though they could be almost every thing desirable without it: not seeming to know that to Christianity is entitled the credit of every good trait in human character, and that what the world calls the most splendid attainments, are only valuable in proportion as they are sanctified to spiritual uses, made subservient to the Spirit's purposes, and excited and controlled by the Spirit's holy influences. It is certainly blindness, in a very great degree, to talk about possessing that, to which, what the Gospel confers may be added, to complete the character. It would be even more sensible to talk about furnishing a splendid scene, by adding all the towering mountains to a mole hill, or all the grand oceans to a mud hole; which is no more ridiculous than the idea of adding the religion of Jesus Christ to the very utmost that can possibly be done for human character without it. With all the advantages that literary or moral culture can possibly afford, without religion, man is but vanity.

To be right in many respects, and to possess many good and useful qualities, reduces greatly all palliations which might be asked for slight defects, because all these are possessed, as the ample means of overcoming the inferior faults. The fact of virtue's having the decided predominancy in our nature, so far from extenuating the guilt of subordinate evil, is rather an aggravation of it, from the fact that it can only be supposed to exist with approbation, seeing that facilities for extermination are so very abundant. To allow the existence of a disgraceful and constantly annoying foe from year to year, while the most ample means for its destruction are continually enjoyed, must certainly be regarded much to their discredit who do it.

The wretchedness of being inconsistent farther consists in being liable to have our weak parts broken in upon. However invulnerable most of our positions may be, it avails nothing while others are weak and unfortified. To have a good fence all round a farm, except a few gaps, will be to little purpose until they are closed. Where parts are manifestly unsound, it affords ground to have the whole suspected, and destroy confidence in any part, at least expose to great trouble, confusion, and discomfiture, from which

it will cost much to be delivered. After exercising great self-denial, mortification, and labor, to become almost a Christian—having acquired many noble sentiments, amiable qualities, useful habits, and human tempers, altogether constituting considerable ornament of character—the greater the number of fine, plausible refinements, the greater will be the wretchedness of losing all these on account of a few defects. Though things may be right with us in many respects, the lack of only one thing may involve the loss of heaven, and utter impossibility of avoiding the damnation of the soul and body in hell forever. Heaven admits of no imperfections; and herein will consist much of its glory and excellency. The awful magnificence of hell will no doubt consist much in the splendor of its pompous ruins; perhaps a large portion of those the world counted good and great will be found there, exercising their rare gifts in most woful lamentations over their follies in the earth; the tall, the wise and illustrious sons of earth will be there, with many great emperors, warriors, kings, princes, popes, cardinals, and bishops, whose motives in their earthly movements were not the glory of God. There much of the world's greatness will be contemplated in the most thril-

lingly magnificent ruins—characters once exalted almost to heaven, fallen from their shining heights into the most inextricable depths of degradation and misery; once in possession of many grand and interesting traits, but lost for want of the one thing needful.



SERMON VI.

BY REV. LABAN JONES.

The Character and Prospects of God's People.

There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.—HEB.
BREWS IV. 9.

Exemption from disquietude has always been a very prominent object of human pursuit. It has been sought in ways almost incredible. As yet, although half a century has passed over us, we have never met the one who has truly found it. That there are burning desires for, and conscious susceptibilities of it, in our natures, all feel; hence, effort after effort follows, in rapid succession, to obtain it. Through their whole career in the earth, worldly men seek rest and satisfaction in the possession of wealth; to obtain which they resolutely encounter every hardship, face every storm, peril every danger, both of sea and land, and make their lives a continued scene of most intense labor of both body and mind; ever grasping, but never able to obtain; at one moment encouraged with hopes of success, anon, dejected with blighted hopes and

blasted prospects; believing still success to be practicable, they renew, with more determined energy the anxious effort. Though discomfiture and defeat may often occur, the incessant struggle to get *fixed comfortably*, is very rarely relinquished until life expires.

Others seek to fill the aching void in their constantly aspiring bosoms, with the empty breath of fame. To gain the dazzling honors, are often sacrificed wealth and ease, with that of an infinitely greater price than all — a good conscience. Some seek it in ease and sensuality; thinking that to have wherewith to gratify the eye, the ear, the appetite, and other senses, and be exempt from obligations to toil and care, will surely secure rest and quietness in the earth. After long years of incessant and vexatious anxiety, and hard labor — seeking rest and finding none — the unwelcome approach of the King of Terrors makes the first successful admonition of the error and recklessness of their career, which is often closed with the bitterest reflections upon its imprudence and profligacy.

After a life spent in the most unparalleled success, in all its enterprises, in virtue of which may be amassed any amount of all that the world counts good and desirable — the disappointed and

almost chagrinned possessor, loaded with his abundance, is left still to lament a destitution and emptiness which no earthly object is sufficient to supply, and without which, he is destined to remain a most miserable object, "while being lasts or immortality endures." Possessed of all that earth or its inhabitants can give—its friendship, honor, wealth, and ease—man must be poor indeed if this is all he has. Without religion, he cannot have much, compared with it. His natural element is piety. God made and constructed both soul and body for its sentiments, its principles, its graces, its exercises, its enjoyments, with its entire elements and properties. To be without it, is as certain to occasion disquietude to man, as for any other creature to be out of its proper place, or alienated from its proper connection. Void of this, he is not only destitute of the enjoyment of solid repose, but entirely without a reasonable prospect of it, because no sublunary good can give it. Emptiness and vanity are truly inscribed on all things here below. The one who thinks what was when sin was not, and what will be when sin shall be no more, and believes it both his duty and his privilege to aspire to that exalted state,

can but be impatient while confined to these low grounds of degradation and sorrow.

That infinite Wisdom designed the higher state for man we have no doubt; for he takes no pleasure in our death, our depravity, or sin, but desires that we should turn therefrom, and live, and enjoy the rest which remains for his people. God gave no faculty to man in creation, but what was designed to be exercised for his glory, and the happiness of the possessor. Since man has sinned, his whole energies have become perverted; and he has not only forfeited, but rendered himself absolutely incompetent to the rest and joys of the heavenly state, and justly exposed himself to the damnation of hell. Yet God has cared for him, and provided a way whereby he may still be saved to enjoy the heavenly repose. However probable it is that many may be eternally lost, on account of their sin and incorrigible perseverance in it, their impenitence and unbelief; yet we think it most incontrovertible, "that the world might be saved," ought to be saved, and if not, will be doubly censurable; seeing the Lord has found a ransom, and so freely offers salvation to every one, saying—"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else,"

Isa. xlv. 22—with many passages of similar import; whereby we are clearly assured of God's wish and will that the world might come to the knowledge of the truth, repent and believe the Gospel, and be eternally saved.

The world is constituted of two great prominent classes, the righteous and the wicked—the people of God, and the servants of sin. The fact of the great variety into which each of these classes are sub-divided, renders a just discrimination between them a most critical and important part of a minister's work. No doubt there are abstract traits of character belonging to individuals of each class, which, with a cursory observer, go far to indicate their identity with the other. Even the best of the righteous could and should be better, and it will not be disputed that they are susceptible of great improvement; neither can it be contended that even the worst of the wicked cannot be degenerated and more deeply degraded. The great diversity of character presented to us, when attempting to discriminate, it is often extremely difficult to draw our portraits justly. In so many instances, we have such a commingled mixture of good and bad, as greatly to perplex one in trying to distinguish between the righteous and the wicked.

Though it is true that peccability and error belong to men in every condition; and though it might be possible that some men who are deists, on the whole, may have a more plausible outward appearance than some sincere believers in Jesus Christ; yet it is much more certain, that when each character is fully and fairly developed, the difference in favor of the believer will be found to be immense, and their future prospects as variant as hell and heaven. Surely, in the day of eternity, the difference will be fearfully great between him who is called to give account for all his sins, upon the principles of a pure and holy law, and he who enjoys the Gospel assurances of pardon, and interestedness in the atoning righteousness of Jesus Christ.

That we may not apply the promises made to the people of God, to those who are not entitled to claim them, we propose to show,

I. Who are the people of God.

II. The rest and happiness they have in prospect.

III. The certainty of their realizing it.

IV. Why it remaineth.

V. Why for them only.

I. To describe correctly the people of God, is

a most important effort. We are all the people of God by creation, by preservation, and also in the sense of redemption by price, as, "God so loved the *world*, that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" John iii. 16; also, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us *all*;" Romans viii. 32. That the Lord's right to us is deeply founded in propriety; and that it would most highly conduce to our happiness and credit, to acknowledge such right, all agree; yet in our apostate state, we are far from being in the most endearing and important sense, the people of God. In this condition we are truly represented, in the holy Scriptures, as aliens, enemies, and strangers to God by wicked works.

To know ourselves, and what we are by nature and sin, is a matter of the first importance. It is, unquestionably, because men think more highly of themselves than they ought to think, that they neglect taking that concern about their condition which wisdom and prudence evidently require that they should take. For men to think well of their condition, when in God's account there is no soundness in them—for them to believe their health is firm, when, in truth, the

whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint, is a most pitiable and unfortunate situation. Bible critics and expositors have not fully settled the question of the extent of man's injury and involvement in the fall. Some insist that human depravity is only partial, others that it is total. It cannot be expected that those of the former sentiment would be so deeply solicitous about their condition as those who believe themselves to be diseased from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot. The whole head and heart being sick and faint, and having no soundness in the whole system, would be reckoned a much more dangerous condition than to be partially sick. If it will be allowed by mental philosophy to speak of man as having a moral nature, not properly included in his intellectual, we remark, that in the account of sin, this was the nature in which he most intimately approximated his Maker; being originally organized in the likeness of God, in righteousness and true holiness. To the first trait belonged innocency, to the second purity; and in these mainly consisted man's pristine likeness to his great Creator. The resemblance, to be sure, was carried out in many other particulars; yet, as regards God's omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, independ-

ence, sovereignty, and many other things, man could not be said to bear any thing like a resemblance.

In the fall our principal loss was righteousness and true holiness. To the absence of the first, we attribute our great load of guilt, accumulated by the rebellion of many long years, in addition to that endured in common with our fellow creatures, on account of the original sin of our first representative; in virtue of which, we have lost all right and title to the favor of God, or the bliss of heaven. To the absence of the second, we attach our depravity and corruption, and consequent want of meetness for heavenly society. The understanding, too, is involved in darkness, and all the faculties, both intellectual and physical, injured to a great extent.

It is not, however, so much of what may be called an organic or a functionary derangement of the intellect, else mental alienation must have been the result. None of the constituent attributes of our nature are lost in the fall, though all are vitiated, perverted, and prostituted to uses, not only foreign, but directly inimical to the uses for which they were originally conferred.

Man is still a man, a sound living man; pos-

sessed of a sane mind, and sound physical and intellectual organs; though dead in trespasses and sins, since his apostacy. But to say that on account of this death, man is as incompetent to do any thing which concerns the promotion of his spiritual interests, until he is quickened by Divine Grace, as a man naturally dead would be unable to attend to his secular affairs, we look upon as so extremely ultra as almost to refute itself. Sinners dead in trespasses are surely to be instructed, exhorted and reproved. It is their imperious duty to turn at the Divine reproof; to repent, to call on the Lord, to cease to do evil, to learn to do well, and to come to and trust in the Lord Jesus for life and salvation. And though it is true that without aid from on high, none of these things will ever be attended to, it is also true, that gracious help is always afforded, commensurate with our accountability. There are things essential to regeneration to which human ability is entirely inadequate; hence we conclude that Divine assistance is enjoyed, to aid in every duty, and in every step in seeking religion, without which we can have no success. Jesus says, "No man can come to me except the Father, which sent me, draw him;" John vi. 44. This gracious drawing is evident-

ly necessary in order to a sinner taking the first step towards embracing Christ, or becoming a Christian; and that the sinner, as a free agent, may reject or decline that assistance, we think, is clearly taught. Christ says, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life;" John v. 40; which remark is evidently predicated upon a gracious obviation of impediments to coming, so that the sinner, being enabled by grace to come, and being fully invited to come; yet is not coerced or forced to come, irrespective of his own agency.

Our doctrine is, that God's drawing is indispensable, and that the sinner's submission thereto is also necessary, which submission the sinner is wooed and most pressingly and cordially entreated to render, yet is not constrained to make, but may refuse, and thereby fail to be saved. The Lord will, but the sinner will not; and this is not, as some would unjustly try to construe our position, "giving the creature more power than the Creator." It truly places all the power with God; yet represents man as an intelligent free agent, notwithstanding his great guilt and depravity; and makes the co-operation of his agency highly important in his salvation. As the Gospel does not address itself particular-

ly to man's piety or virtue, but to his reason and intelligence, his depravity and death in trespasses and sins is no such insurmountable impediment in the way of his being exhorted and reasoned with, as to make our expostulations as ineffectual as they would be with a man naturally dead, or engaged in such secular employ as might be to his interest. God always inclines and aids; and efficiency is his; but the sinner obeys and comes to Christ, and all the action is his.

To discriminate between doing a thing in our own and in the Lord's strength, is all the ambiguity that is connected with this subject. In these things to feel that we have no ability at all within ourselves, either natural or moral, but that all our help and strength must come from God, else we cannot think an acceptable thought or take one prudent step in the business of our salvation, is the view which makes us strong in the Lord, and the power of his might; while to feel the least ability or power in ourselves, is consummate weakness, and amounts to a most fatal distrust of our only strong help and hold. It is God's to draw; it is for the sinner to yield. God works in the sinner to will and to do; without which, the sinner could not make a profita-

ble motion. Yet God does not irresistibly compel him to take any step, but entreats and affectionately importunes him to "work out his own salvation with fear and trembling," because he works in him, thereby enabling him to exert himself. That it is not giving the sinner more power than God to say that he does quench the Spirit, resist the Holy Ghost, and persist in destructive courses, in despite of the most affectionate remonstrances of the Almighty to the contrary, we think is very clear, from 1 Thes. v. 19, "Quench not the Spirit;" Acts vii. 51, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye." Now these wicked men, who resist, and "do despite to the Spirit of Grace," surely had not more power than God, although they persisted in their own ways, entirely contrary to the counsel and wish of their great Creator. As well might we talk about a child having more power than its parent, because it is incorrigible, and persists in courses which are contrary to the will and pleasure of the parent; or of a rebellious subject having more power than the magistrate, because he tramples on the laws. Surely, we ought not to teach men to wait and look for God actually to do

what he has commanded us to do, and, in view of our entire helplessness, promises, provides, and offers us abundant grace, to enable us to do.

Our fall, though it entirely depraves our nature, enervates our powers, degrades our standing, and makes us children of wrath, does not destroy our obligation to good, or utterly obliterate our sense of it. The fact that our rectitude is so entirely subverted and destroyed by sinning, evidently renders it necessary that a great work be done in us, and for us, before we can be recognized as the people of God, and fit for the heavenly society. This work, as a whole, may be termed a new creation, a conversion; it however includes much, and no one word expresses fully and clearly to ordinary apprehension, the entire sentiment of this change. Being the great desideratum in religion, it should be closely and well understood and experienced. We should not conclude, because we have a partial acquaintance with some of its constituent items, attended to some of its injunctions, and been exercised in some of its privileges, that we are the subjects of the whole work. There are many steps we may take towards religion, very important and desirable in order thereto, and yet we may never become Christians, be constituted

Israelites indeed, and be really entitled to call God our Father. We may make a good beginning, but never finish; commence in the Spirit, but end in the flesh; and at last reap corruption. There are many things truly desirable and interesting, which we do not feel authorized to insist on as absolutely essential requisites to Christian character, without which, one could not be constituted a child of God, or to be entitled to claim and feast on the promises of the Gospel: such as particular forms of prayer, even family prayer, however much it is desired to see all Christians attend to it; attention to the sacrament, a duty which should be very sacredly observed; or baptism, however important in its place; because it is nowhere said that, except ye be baptized ye shall perish, as it is said of other things, which we are compelled to regard as more vitally connected with our best interest. We propose to speak principally, in this part of our discourse, of things, without which, men cannot be saved at all; but must inevitably be lost forever.

It is highly important that we be thoroughly convinced of our lost and condemned estate by the fall, our guilt and depravity, and the consequent justice of our exposure to the damnation

of hell. Many people look upon liabilities to future misery as a kind of misfortune, for which they attach blame to their fore-parents, rather than to themselves. It is by no means uncommon for persons to speak of themselves softly, as being in danger of being lost, and as standing in great need of religion, and yet, evidently look upon themselves with a very flattering amount of complacency and approbation. To be uneasy about future misery, and not feel that our crimes deserve it, certainly expresses a great want of confidence in Him who sways the universal scepter, and sits upon his throne, to protect the innocent, and to see that men are punished according to their sins. Fallen sinners do not properly contemplate their guilt and depravity, so as feel the justice of their exposure to the damnation of hell, and the great reasonableness and propriety of the punishment. The difficulty with an enlightened sinner will not be whether a good and loving God would torment with eternal wo, a sinner no more vile or guilty than he conceives himself to be; but the question will be, how can one so depraved, as to sin with a high hand, in a land of Bibles, ever be saved, or made fit for heaven, and its refined and blissful associations. A sinner truly

convicted feels not only that he is in danger of being lost, but that he most richly deserves to be damned; and he cannot see how God can be just and do any thing else with him but send him to hell. It is from the fair administration of purest justice that he apprehends his destruction; and the brighter the manifestations of the Divine goodness and truth, the more inevitable is his ruin. If he looks upward, indignant Heaven frowns on him for his great wickedness; if he looks downward, hell is moving to receive him; if he looks back, he sees the guilt of myriads of sins crying for his punishment; if he looks forward, he sees a large crop of corruption and maturing calamity, disgrace and damnation, for him to reap; if he looks around him, all nature accuses him of a vile prodigality of her favors, and of a most faithless use of his privileges; if he stops to meditate, or in solitude kneels to pray, there is nothing much he feels but the pressing load of condemnation for his sins; if he looks into the holy Bible, where only he can hope to learn a remedy for his great distress, the law declares him guilty, and liable to its whole penalty, which is no less than damnation of hell; while he is constrained to acknowledge that the law is holy, just, and good. In many things he

seeks rest, but finds none, until he is able believingly to "behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," and sees in him a fullness of redemption, and ample satisfaction in his vicarious death and sufferings to atone for the sins of the whole world; in whom alone there is peace and comfort to an almost despairing soul.

This conviction is essential to, and may be called the first part of that genuine repentance, without which, we must all necessarily perish; the further exercises of which are an humble confession of sin, with all the aggravations of its guilt, with sincere prayer to God, in the name and for the sake of Jesus, to pardon; with acknowledgment of the unworthy and justly condemned condition of the penitent, whose supplication is always in the language of one unholy and guilty, crying for mercy and forgiveness. The true penitent is always contrite in heart, and sorrows bitterly over his sins, which is evinced by turning from sin, ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well. In all these exercises, the Lord, by his Spirit, works in the sinner's heart, enabling him, by his grace, to take every step. We cannot say that there is a single movement toward salvation which the sinner can take with-

out the drawings and promptings of the Holy Ghost. But the good Spirit, in this respect, will not be the actor, but the helper. No one will ever fail in attempting any movement toward salvation, on account of the Lord being slack to aid him. The almighty help is always nigh, and always urged upon the helpless rebel, who, though his need is great, his pride is never less; by which the offered grace is spurned, and the sinner left in his condemnation and his weakness. So that not only God the Father loved the world and desired its salvation, as did God the Son, who tasted death for every man, that every man might be saved; but God the Holy Ghost certainly strives with every man, and is especially solicitous for their salvation; and whose almighty drawings would no doubt prevail, and bring the sinner to repentance and salvation, if it were not most wickedly striven against, resisted, and quenched.

It is certainly the most consummate perversity and sin, for poor helpless sinners to strive against, and most incorrigibly oppose the gracious efforts of the Holy Spirit to reclaim and save them from eternal ruin. Yet this very conduct men are guilty of; and but for such unnat-

ural demeanor, we could hope to see them saved in heaven.

We hear very much properly said of the love of the Father, and of the sufferings of the Son, as motives to influence people to repent and seek salvation. Should we not tell them that "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not (even) what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered;" Rom. viii. 26. It is the appropriate work of the precious Spirit to enlighten, to convince, to reprove, to incline us to consider, to awaken and excite us to turn from sin and seek the Lord; in all things to help our infirmities, to offer and apply the great Gospel provision, to comfort, to bear witness with our spirits that we are the children of God, to assure our hearts, and build us up in our most holy faith, and to establish us in every good word, good work, and good way.

Perhaps there is nothing in which men are more criminal than in doing despite to the Holy Spirit. We are conscious there is nothing more highly tributary to their ruin. Though infinite salvation is provided, there is no other agent that can introduce us to its benefits, and induct us

into its high and holy enjoyments; yet there is no other counsel that we give less heed to, or influence that we more oppose.

The controversy now-a-days is not so much about the amplitude of the Gospel provisions as the design of the Provider, and the medium and terms of its application. In this, the character and work of the Holy Spirit are most prominent, hence should be carefully studied and duly appreciated—not by ministers only, but by all who desire to be saved. This part of religious instruction has been so much neglected that some have even rejected the blessed Spirit from a name, a place, or even a being in the systems of popular theology, as an object of Divine worship, or an actor in the great work of human redemption from the guilt, the power, and the punishment of sin. That the Spirit is willing, and that he invites all with equal cordiality and benevolence of purpose, we think is clearly taught by the Word and Spirit. The Bible is a Divine communication to the world to partake of its great provisions. Jesus, its great author, says, “Come, for all things are now ready.”—“No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost;” 1 Cor. xii. 4. Yet there are diversities of gifts, of administrations, of ope-

rations; but it is the same Spirit, the same almighty Lord God, who giveth divers gifts, and worketh all in all, to subserve one grand design—the glory of his great name in the salvation of fallen sinners. For this purpose, “the manifestation of the Spirit is given to *every man*, to profit withall,” making it most manifest that it never was God’s original purpose that any of his immortal creatures should be involved in eternal ruin; but that their salvation, ruined as they are by sin, is proper, reasonable, practicable, and desirable; and if they are lost, which is greatly to be feared concerning many, it will be their own fault; and will equally contravene the wish and will, as it will the purpose and good pleasure of the great Creator.

Some, we know, will regard it as highly profane to speak of an event as possible without regard to the Divine purpose, as positively or permissively decreeing it. If the Divine mind has wishes and a preference for virtue over vice, is it not equally disrespectful to the Divine character to allow it to be practicable to disregard his good pleasure in this respect?

On the subject of Divine sovereignty, and decrees of election, distinguishing grace, with their Calvinistic constructions, and kindred details, we

can but think there now stands ably, sophistically concocted, in what is called the theology of the world, an account of I do n't know what, because it is so much, you can, and you can't; which must be felt to the prejudice of the interests of sterling piety, and true evangelical holiness, in our humble opinion, for many centuries to come. That it predominates in the world, we are compelled to admit. That its advocates are sincere, as well as able and accomplished, we no more question than we do its unhappy and pernicious tendencies. That many of its friends are high minded, devoted, exemplary, and most eminently useful and distinguished Christians, we no more question than we do that they are mistaken, both in the biblical correctness of their position, and its tendencies in this respect, to the glory of God and the good of man; on which account it is often adopted where its real merits could never gain cordial and sentimental approbation.

An extended notice of this subject, however, does not come within our present scope, only to try and have every sinner feel that Christ died for him with as full and sincere a design to have him saved in heaven, as he did for any body else; and that if the complete purpose of God concern-

ing the whole universe was all given, in most minute detail, so that there was not a secret thing in the bosom of God, but what the sinner and all his neighbors knew, there would not be found one single item in all the sublime, the infinite variety and magnitude of the Divine purposes, calculated, in the slightest degree, or in the remotest possible sense, to discourage or hinder any, and every, and all sinners, from an immediate and most unreserved confidence in Christ Jesus, for life and eternal salvation in heaven. On the contrary, the more we learn about God, his plans and purposes, the more we will be convinced that he takes no pleasure in the death or damnation of any, but would infinitely rather that they should turn and live forever in glory. In order to this, we might ask, what more could the Lord do or have done to save sinners that he has not done, and is not still doing by the operations of his Spirit, his word, his providence, and grace?

Let us beg for a little reflection here. Men who are least reconciled to what God is, and what he does, are apt to be filled with the wildest chimeras about what would be desirable for him to do for human comfort. Their reveries are not unlike the critic's who desired the pump-

kins on the oak, and the acorns on the vine, till by the pelt of an acorn on his pate he was admonished of his folly.

No sinner should be discouraged from coming to Christ, for he is emphatically the Friend of sinners, and "is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish." He is loving to all, and "his tender mercies are over all his works." He takes no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, but is grieved at the obduracy and impenitency of our hearts; entreats, invites, and importunes us to flee to the outstretched arms of bleeding mercy, shown in the dying love of Jesus, of whom says Peter, "Of a truth, I perceive God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him;" Acts x. 34, 35. Wherever God enjoins a duty on a helpless being, it may confidently be relied on that his grace shall be sufficient for the work; and that there never shall be a failure on the mere ground of imbecility. Utterly destitute of inherent strength as the object of the injunction may be, if it be a clear and indubitable command of God to a man to do what mortal man had never done, and what to human sense and reason might clearly seem imposible for him to

do, it would be very criminal disobedience to refuse, and not to lean on the Almighty arm, and try; and trying thus, obstacles mountain high, shall dwindle down to mole hills.

There have been many theories on the subject of repentance, but all harmonize the sentiment of its indispensableness to pardon and salvation. It has been sometimes divided into legal and evangelical repentance: this peculiar to saints, that to sinners; one existed by servile fear and dread of the law's penalty, the other by filial regard, and veneration for a kind benefactor and his will concerning us. That this theory is infallibly correct, we do not assume; we know it cannot be upon the hypothesis, that all repentance succeeds regeneration — from which theory, however, we must dissent most decidedly; the extensive adoption and highly respectable endorsement of it notwithstanding — because, if men can be born of God before repentance or faith is exercised, they are children of God as soon as born of him; if children, they are heirs of God, and joint heirs of Christ, and entitled to all that the Gospel promises, before they repent and believe in the Lord Jesus. It does seem as though persons embracing this sentiment, must be very much as the Calvinists say

of the Armenians, that "they either will not inform themselves, or must be very deficient in candor." While it is proper enough to guard against too much servility in our fears, we should also be careful to watch against blindness in our confidence; avoiding the excesses of both timidity on the one hand, and presumption on the other. That men should condemn the idea of being actuated by the fear of hell, and speak with sneering scorn of the sentiment, as being too servile and contemptible to govern a high born son of the church, highly loaded with clerical dignities and preferments, is not surely the brightest or most irrefragible proof of Christian character. Truly, it is the very genius of piety, to allay all fear that has torment; but while even Christians are very imperfect and faulty in their manners, and the power of godliness but very partially developed in them, so as to render it matter of serious doubt, both with themselves and others, whether the service of God or of mammon engage them most. It is certainly not reprehensible for such to have fears of being finally lost. There are few conditions more to be deprecated than one of presumptuous carnal security. It is surely proper to fear hell, till assured that sin is pardoned; while different

feelings and motives about sin actuate those who have assurance of their gracious adoption.

In repentance, men are led to a just contemplation of their legal relations to the throne and government of God, in which they can but see their lost estate; hence the legitimate tendency of it is, to bring us to believe and trust in Christ as the only Saviour of sinners, in whom, if we truly confide, we have the promise of salvation. To become a believer in Christ, implies the greatest sentimental change of which man is susceptible; which will necessarily exert a corresponding influence over his whole temper and conduct. Contemplate Christianity from almost any point, faith always appears a most important and prominent item. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him:" John iii. 36. That all kinds of men may have some kind of faith in some things, will not be questioned; that they may believe in very many great truths, and not necessarily believe in Jesus Christ as their Saviour, with hearts unto righteousness, we have no doubt. It is all well to believe that there is a God, a heaven, a hell, that there is a divine law, that there will be rewards and punishments for

virtue and for vice; but this may be believed by rejectors of Christ. The belief of these are, to be sure, in order to faith in Christ, but by no means necessarily productive of it. The faith which is instrumental in our justification, and induction into Christ, the living Vine, so that we may receive from Him vitality, strength, and every grace, is that which interests us most; to which the promises of the gospel are annexed; which is, to its possessor, "the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen," and by which we are enabled to overcome the world, by the elevation of our hopes, desires, and feelings, above its frowns and favors.

Faith has been a subject, very fruitful of elaborate remark; its definition has been labored much: the kinds, as well as the nature and effects of it, with the benefits, consequences, and evidences of it, and, very especially, the origin and authorship of it, have been extensively dwelt upon. Whether it be the gift of God, or the act of the creature, has been a most vexed query with some of the most sage critics and theologians; we think it will likely never be settled, because, like many other knotty questions, both sides are wrong. Though it is properly said that faith is the gift of God, it is not improper

to say it is the act of the creature. Certainly, the entire difference between belief and unbelief, or faith and infidelity, is not brought about irrespective of human agency, and we are certain it is not without Divine influence. That God is entitled to all the credit, for the existence of faith in any one, is certainly true, yet, that he does not force any to believe, is equally clear. There is such a thing as the "grace of faith," which we think is often very poorly defined, to mean power to believe, with the object and sufficient evidence to predicate faith upon, saying nothing of a *disposition to believe*. That such a believing temper should be prayed for by a penitent seeker of religion, we think just as proper as that Christians should pray for an increase of faith. Many of the most intelligent, penitent inquirers after deliverance from condemnation and sin, profess to feel—and we regard it as entirely congenial with the word of God, our own experience, and with mental and moral philosophy, that they should feel—great affliction, on account of an "evil heart of unbelief," from which we think it entirely proper for them to pray to be delivered, as much as they should, from any other obstacle in the way of their acceptance with God, and enjoyment of assurance of His favor.

To be incredulous, and slow to believe what men say, is often well enough, because men are sometimes false, and always fallible; in the absence of all such reasons, we should not be incredulous to declarations coming from any quarter; and to refuse to believe Him who cannot lie, is most criminal unbelief, especially while the veracity of whose declarations have been confirmed by the fulfillment of hundreds of prophecies, by many signs and wonders, and divers miracles, and in ways so clear and cogent, that to refuse to believe, must be no less criminal than a wilful rejection of truth and propriety. To have hearts disposed to credulity towards God, or a readiness to hear and credit divine declarations, belongs to what we call the grace of faith; which ought to be prayed for by every penitent. None will dispute such a temper being the gift of God, or got up in the mind by Divine influence; yet incorrigible sinners may, and often do, no doubt, reject it, or pervert it, and die in unbelief, and are for ever lost. It is clear, however, that all the Lord does, in this respect, will not necessarily result in the soul's salvation, unless the sinner *exercise the gift* of God, which may be in him.

Faith, we think, includes, not only the assent

of the understanding to the whole truth of the Gospel, but also an intelligent and sincere subscription thereto with the heart and affections. It is a hearty and approving acquiescence in the doctrines of the Cross, mingled with love, joy, and gratitude to Heaven, for the wondrous plan. Faith includes coming to Christ, relying, trusting, confiding, and putting on Christ, receiving him in his true character, as God-man, possessing both human and divine natures, in the person of one Mediator, and the only possible medium of access, whereby fallen men can consistently communicate with God, or whereby God can consistently communicate with sinners: Also, to receive him in his proper offices, as Prophet, Priest, King, Shepherd, and Saviour; to teach, atone for, rule, keep, and save us. This faith is the medium of approach to the atoning merits of the blessed Saviour's vicarious and sacrificial obedience, both active and passive; each being equally necessary to the believer's complete justification and acceptance before the throne of God. Whatever interesting traits of character men may have, if they believe not in the Lord Jesus Christ, with a heart unto righteousness, they must be eternally lost. The fact that the Lord gives us faith, is by no means to be under-

stood in such a way as to excuse us from the very solemn responsibility of a proper exercise of it.

The next important item we notice, indispensable in passing from condemnation to grace and salvation, is justification : which is an act of God's free and unmerited grace, in which he pardoneth all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in his sight, alone for Jesus' sake.

We have had various theories on the subject of justification. It being so vital a procedure in becoming a Christian, it should be carefully and prayerfully studied. There has been such a thing talked about as eternal justification, even by learned and eminent men in religion, yet, we must think, much deluded and mistaken men. Some have taught justification by works, and have boldly affirmed that without baptism none can properly claim to be pardoned sinners; and that, in the great economy of the King of glory, forgiveness of sin is connected specially with baptism, and its promises confined only to the baptized; and that persons of the greatest piety, and most eminent moral attainments, with all the repentance and faith of Peter and Paul, with ever so much meekness, gentleness, and other Christian graces, if they had not been baptized, and

that too by having the body put entirely under the water, they were not authorized by the Bible to regard themselves—though ever so diffidently—as having the least share in the pardon conferred by the Lord Jesus Christ, having been bought with His own precious blood, and so freely and graciously promised to them who truly believe on His name, and confide in Him as their Prophet, Priest, and King, their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Others have spoken of conditions of justification for men to perform, upon compliance with which, they might confidently expect to be accomplished. This view, we have no doubt, has often been very fruitful of self-righteous presumption, because of its tendency to induce a kind of forgetfulness of our entire dependence on sovereign and unmerited grace; not only for justification, but for the whole of salvation in all respects.

On the very important subject of justification, we consider that the great meritorious and procuring cause of it is the atonement, made by the Lord Jesus Christ for the sins of the world; and that it is most highly disrespectful to the Saviour, and fatal to sound theology, and the salvation of souls, to connect any thing with the blood of Christ, the death and vicarious work of the bless-

ed Redeemer in behalf of poor sinners, as furnishing the least part or strength of the ground of justification. Attempts to introduce other things, what ever else it shows, must prove a great want of confidence in the all-sufficiency — for expiation, atonement, and propitiation — of the one great sacrifice for sin, made by our blessed Lord, “who (himself) was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification,” that by Him all that believe might be justified; that, being justified by His blood, we might be saved from wrath through Him: for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin, and by it alone, as the price of our ransom, we are absolved from guilt and condemnation. Nothing short of what Christ has done for us, can meet the demands of the broken law of God against us; nothing can be taken in substitution for the sacrifice of the Christ, while nothing can possibly be added to render it a more complete satisfaction. Should I give my body to be burned, and all my goods to feed the poor, with a view of adding the remotest possible reason to those furnished by the wondrous Cross, why God should justify the guilty, it would evince blindness and wickedness of a most provoking character, and be most highly disparaging to the merit of the

sacrifice of the Son of God. In this sentiment, we would not disparage good works by any means, but we would try to make the indelible impression, "That a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ; even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we may be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Gal. ii. 16.

"But now the righteousness of God (such as is required of men) is manifested, (evidently enjoyed,) being witnessed (taught and the sentiment approved) by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God, which is (received) by faith of Jesus Christ (offered) unto all, and (truly bestowed) upon all them that believe; for there is no difference, (made among sinners,) for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; (and now,) being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood; to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time, His righteousness, that He might be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting, then? It

is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay! but by the law of faith; therefore, we conclude, a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law." Romans iii. 21-28.

Faith is no part at all of the meritorious cause of pardon, for which we stand entirely indebted to the atonement of Christ. Yet it is the only instrumental cause, as without it there is no possible access to a saving interest in the righteousness of Christ; which is the end of the law to the believer, the price of his pardon, and only ground of his acceptance before God. It is needless to multiply quotations to prove that "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness," "for the Scripture saith, whosoever believeth on Him (Christ) shall not be ashamed;" and "therefore, being justified by faith, (as the instrument,) we have peace with God through (the merits of) our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans v. i.

Faith is truly a most prominent grace; hence many others connect themselves with it, or follow in its train. He that believeth not, whatever he may do, he must be lost; but he who has genuine, evangelical faith, though he may have very serious destitutions to mourn over, yet the promises of the Bible stand written in his favor; not on his own account, but on ac-

count of Him who is received by faith, to the merit of whose righteousness alone heaven and earth are awarded.

Faith is the only hand which can grasp the price that buys the crown of life, which can not be received or appropriated by any other hand, or possessed by any other efforts. To say that we are not justified by faith alone, but by faith, baptism, the blood of Christ, the Holy Spirit, and other things, is, to inconsiderate people, imposingly plausible; but when critically viewed, it is little else than bombast, seeing that it is in entirely different senses that we are justified by each of these; we are not justified by faith at all in the sense that we are by either of the others, and so of each of these particulars, as we will endeavor, hereafter, more clearly to show.

Owing to the hostility of our natures against the Gospel, which we have so deeply imbibed in the fall, we would forever remain in our unbelief and condemnation, but for the drawing of the Holy Spirit, who is the only *efficient cause* of our ever coming to Christ, and being interested in his atoning merits. In this sense we are justified by the Holy Spirit, by whose almighty power and gracious influences our opposition is over-

come; and we have applied to us the benefits of that redemption purchased by Christ, and received, through faith, in the merit of his sacrifice. With hearts so entirely perverse and corrupted by sin, aside from the agency of the precious Spirit, it could be to no saving purpose that we might enjoy all the outward means of grace, which are by Divine influence made so happily effectual in dispelling our darkness, subduing our enmity to God and one another, and whereby we may have our pardon sealed, and assurance of eternal life, full of rich and abundant consolations, freely and most precious vouchsafed to our believing hearts. The Spirit knows the deep things of God and redemption, and reveals them unto us, and we have given us the Spirit, which cometh from God, that we might know the things which are freely given to us. The Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and is our light, our life, our strength, by whom alone we are enabled to lay hold of the hope set before us in the Gospel of our salvation, and to rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. In every step we take in the whole affair of justification, we are indebted to the Holy Ghost for all our efficiency; and it will be happy for us, if we will only be wise, and try to exercise the grace and strength

so freely and abundantly afforded us. But there is a sense in which it is said, "Ye see, then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." James ii. 24. Paul had said of Abraham, that "he believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Romans iv. 3. And speaking of the meritorious causes of justification, that it was not by works, but by faith, James here speaks of the power of Abraham's faith, in producing works, as being a fulfillment or assurance to the people of the correctness of the declaration concerning him, and of his being properly called the friend of God.

Justification, you know, is a forensic term, meaning acquittal from guilt or liability to legal penalties; it takes place, in fact, in heaven, in the mind of God. But there is an assurance of it afforded, in the believer's heart, and by the power of the Spirit working through his faith, on his conversation and conduct.

A demonstration of it is afforded to others, which we denominate justification in a declarative sense; in which sense we understand men to be justified by prayer, baptism, and good works of all kinds, and not in an instrumental sense only, which is by faith alone. We need not speak of the consummate folly of talking about

great and unshaken faith, in the almost entire absence of good works; it cannot be, faith is not only a prominent, but a controlling grace; where it exists, it must govern to a great extent.

In justification, legal censures being canceled, the believer is invested with the enjoyment of Christian and gracious rights in the kingdom of God; in virtue of which, through his meritorious Head, he has access to other privileges. "As many as received Him (by faith for justification) to them gave he power to become the sons of God, (by regeneration and adoption,) even to them that believe on His name." John i. 12. In placing regeneration, or being born of God, subsequent in order of doctrine, and of event too, so far as the idea of succession of events belongs to the subject, we are apprised that we are not walking in the theological footsteps of some of our fathers, yet, believing we have the authority of the word and spirit of our great Father, we determine, but with great respect and timidity, to differ. Our arrangement will be evidently agreeable to that class of theologians who connect regeneration with sanctification, as the beginning part of it, as a natural birth is essential to and an approach towards manhood; because all agree with the Apostle,

who says, "whom He justified, them he also sanctified." Again, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to *forgive our sins*, and to *cleanse us from all unrighteousness*." 1 John i. 9. Here forgiveness seems to go before, and be in order to cleansing; regeneration is a cleansing, a renovation, a change of the character of the soul by the Spirit and grace of God, in which change, though there are no new faculties imparted, all the organs and functions of the soul are so renewed, and so divested of sinful qualities, and, instead thereof, invested with the Spirit of Christ, as to justify the saying, that old things are done away, and all things are become new: new hearts, new spirits, new hopes, new prospects, new lives, new habits, new desires, new motives, new affections, new pursuits, new friends, new enemies, new morals, and new religion. This is truly the Lord's work, wherein we are "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God:" John i. 13; in which "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." Romans v. 5.

The ordinary instrumentalities employed by the Spirit in this work, are the means of grace instituted by the Saviour; but the Lord is free to act without, or to use other means of opera-

tion. This work is necessary, because Jesus says, "ye must be born again," and "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John iii. 5. The only sufficient proof of it, is our piety and benevolence, or love to God and love to men. In the current theology of the present time, there is perhaps more theory and procedure that is lamentably superficial, on the evidences of Christian character, than almost any other subject. A mistake here is so infinitely disastrous, as to deserve a most critical and repeated examination. As we desire to be saved in Heaven, with God and his Christ, we should not pass over it lightly; we should not neglect examining ourselves, and the ground of our hope, most carefully and prayerfully, fully and frequently, lest we be deceived, and there be an evil heart of selfishness contaminating our characters, and rendering worse than vain our very best performances. If Paul properly exhorted the members of churches in his day to take heed and beware of covetousness, deceit, falsehood, and many other flagrant vices, should not we, of this generation, take his admonitions as of no private interpretation, but designed for us also. Should we not be awakened to consider, when we contemplate the solemn upbraidings of

the great Redeemer to the cities wherein most of His mighty works were done, because they repented not; who had been exalted to heaven in point of privilege and opportunities of doing well, and laying up treasure in heaven, and upon whom had been bestowed labor enough to have brought the rebellious and profligate cities of the plains to such repentance, in sackcloth and ashes, as to have preserved them from the fiery ruin to which they were devoted, for their degenerate wickedness. Again, when the Saviour was expostulating with the people of Jerusalem, notwithstanding their high pretensions to religion, he charged them with obduracy, impenitence, and unbelief; and "Jesus saith unto them, verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." Mat. xxi. 31. It is the Christian's privilege and duty, to have the assuring witness in himself, that he is born of God; for "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are born of God:" Rom. viii. 16. The Spirit of God, by his internal, consoling and spiritual suggestions, corroborates the feelings and tempers of our hearts, furnishes such views and evidence of Christian character, and of filial relation to God, as harmonizes with our own conscientious and enlight-

ened apprehensions of the subject; thus ratifying our hearts, and most indubitably assuring them of their gracious interest in the paternity of our great Father who art in heaven.

Being born of God, to consummate the soul's eternal happiness and safety in the enjoyment of intimate association and fellowship with God, it is adopted into the Divine favor and family: thus made an heir of God, and joint heir with Christ; so that as sure as Christ wears his crown, the Christian will share His glory, and through Christ, enjoy the spirit of adoption, which is the spirit of loyalty and filial affection; be taken into the number, and enjoy the promises and privileges of the children of God, with provision for comfort and protection against evils: "who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last day:" 1 Peter i. 5: Kept in lively hope of an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved by their Father in heaven for them. O, what a precious, what an invaluable blessing it is to be adopted. There has been such a thing talked about for ages, among religionists, as eternal adoption; and its kindred sentiments, eternal justification, eternal regeneration, eternal redemption, and even eternal sal-

vation; alluding to indemnities being provided against the consequences of sin, to a certain people, on account of some supposed stipulations in an eternal covenant of redemption, supposed to be entered into between the persons in the adorable Trinity, away back some myriads of millions of years in eternity, before the world was made, or any angel lived; and that the entire events of time, both good and bad, are but the detailed developments of that one great first purpose. But this theory is about to die, under the weight of its own metaphysical seminalities, and kindred adjuncts, after having clogged the wheels of Zion for ages, and having cost much of the labor of truth's veterans, through a long and serious conflict. Believing it, as we do every error, small or great, to be prejudicial to the salvation of men, just in proportion to their magnitude, we trust the time is not distant, when this family of errors shall fall to rise no more.

The farther work of sanctification needful to furnish the soul with a complete outfit for glory, is carried on in the children of adoption, by the Grace and Spirit of God in various way. Sometimes we see them led by the still waters of peace and quietness, and permitted to rest in the green pastures of plenty; anon, we find them in the

walks of adversity, grappling with severe and harrassing hardships, all the time drawing heavenly succor from the precious promises—such as, “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose:” Romans vii. 28. This work, we think is progressive, through the believer’s whole career on earth. That all must attain the same amount and degree of sanctification, we do not contend; else all would have the same reward; and it would not be true that as one star differeth from another in glory or splendor, that it would be so in the resurrection of the dead. Yet there will be no want among the sanctified, as every little cup, as well as every larger one, shall be full of glory, just as much as the capacity will bear. Here I am afraid some poor deluded formalist will conclude that a little cup well filled will do for him, and he will not trouble himself with the labor and self-denial necessary to enlarge his cup or its contents. No one will feel this way who has ever been truly converted, and has tasted and seen that the Lord is precious, and who has found by sweet and happy experience that religion is to be desired above all other things, for its own sake, ir-

respective of its rewards, even if there was no other world than this to enjoy it in.

We have been thus laborious in describing the "people of God," that we might not be guilty of giving the children's bread to dogs, by addressing the future parts of our discourse to mere formalists, we have endeavored to give the theory of a Christian's experience. It is true that there is a minutiae, and detail, and impulse, and emphasis we are not able to tell. But none should claim to be Christians who have not been exercised in pungent conviction for sin, sincere repentance for the same, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ as our great Saviour, justification, regeneration, and adoption, with comfortable assurances of the genuineness of the same; and a feeling of progression in sanctification, being daily more assimilated into the image, and made to take more and more delight in the word, work, and worship of Almighty God, with an increasing hungering after righteousness, a hatred to sin, a diminished solicitude about mere earthly pleasures, and an enlarging engrossedness in heavenly things and works of benevolence. Though it would be well to write volumes to encourage the modest and timid to be more boldly confiding, it is no less important to warn and instruct

the opposite character, lest some conclude too hastily and too favorably in their own cases. In the very best proofs of piety we are very liable to be deceived. *Love to God*, for instance, nearly all men claim to have; the dissolute, profane, dishonest, sensual, and profligate, as well as less licentious persons, with one consent will claim to love God, and will take it seriously amiss to have their pretensions questioned. Though it is a glaring truth that the carnal mind is at enmity with God, it is equally clear that men are blind to it, or wickedly indisposed to confess it. The same perverse equivocations will be exercised on the question of love to the brethren. It is hard indeed for men to see baseness and corruption in their wishes, desires, or hearts; hence we are so easily flattered into a good opinion of our state and condition. It is not uncommon for men to talk as though, and to seem to think that their hearts are given to God and religion entirely, while it is most painfully manifest, that all other things appertaining, or in any wise belonging to the person, is scrupulously withheld, and almost exclusively devoted to worldly uses; neither their time, talents, nor money is given to religion. This is certainly a very great delusion; for he who has but a partial knowledge

of human nature knows, that when men can be intelligently and fully induced to consecrate their hearts to God, the direction of every thing else over which they have control, to the glory of God will be comparatively a small work. The seat of opposition is in the heart; and truly the great point is gained when the heart is won to Christ and his cause; for where the heart is, every thing else will concentrate. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap:" Galla. vi. 7. "There remaineth, therefore, a rest to the people of God."

II. Of the thing signified by this rest there has been much said; but language and figurative representation must for ever be inadequate to a full description of it. "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love him:" 1 Cor. ii. 9. That man is destined for an immortal existence, there are few indeed who will seriously question. It seems to be a matter of general consciousness among people of all nations, all ages, all religions, and all classes. It is argued from the soul's vast powers; the insufficiency of earthly things to satisfy it; its great susceptibility of

pleasure, pain, and improvement; its conscious distress and shame on account of sinning; all of which go to corroborate the clear testimony of God's word on this most important subject. But whether this immortality is to be a happy or a miserable one, is the question of most thrilling interest. To have eternal disquietude would be consummate woe; but the rest that remains for God's people being eternal peace, is consummate bliss. It is not a state of perpetual inactivity and inertion; but of most delightful employment, just suited to our taste, and for which we shall have not only a capacity, but an anxious thirst to engage in, and in which we shall never tire, but like it the better the longer we are exercised therein. "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint:" Isaiah xl. 31. No unpleasant burdens or irksome duties there; there will be an "exceeding and eternal weight of glory," which will be a burden of joy most delightful to be borne; and all we see and do, or are in any way connected with, will be loved and delighted in. Truly, there shall be nothing to annoy in all God's holy place. There is no sickness there; no death, by which

in this poor sin-polluted earth God's own dear people are so much rent and sorely afflicted; uninterrupted health and vigor shall be enjoyed. But the idea that there shall be no sin there is a most enrapturing sentiment to those who have tasted and felt the bitterness of transgression. It is the home of the soul, after a long alienation from it by sin. Think what must be the exceeding great joy, when the wandering lost ones, who had ranged the sterile hills and barren deserts of this inhospitable waste howling wilderness of earth, for many long years, seeking rest but finding none, are at length brought back by Jesus their elder brother to the glorious house of his Father and their's. Surely, there will be joy in heaven, if there is nothing to make it but the return of prodigals to their proper homes, and friends, and kindred; to see the children of tribulation meet, and greet in glory with a holy kiss; to see the afflicted and careworn pilgrims, who go up through much tribulation, salute each other in heaven, their proper home, their Father's house; and high up on the banks of everlasting deliverance raise the glad shout of triumphant victory, and glory, and salvation, and praise to God, and to the Lamb, and to the Holy Ghost forever; each one bearing the

palm of conquest, with Christ, and the cross, and grace, and glory written on it, to show by whom they had been enabled to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil.

It is a place of perfect peace, where the sound of discord is never heard, and the purest love, and friendship shall abound among the whole vast assembly, which no man can number. The entire sentiment of joy, delight, holiness, light, life, bliss, sanctification, favor, blessedness, communion, and uninterrupted fellowship with God, angels, and glorified Spirits shall be enjoyed with a most perfect relish forever. If we may judge of future happiness by the ecstatic raptures of its foretastes, enjoyed by faith and hope, by the people of God in the earth, we conclude its bliss is unfading glory and fullness of joy, which no fancy can paint or tongue describe. It is a purchased possession. If we consider its cost, we must conclude it is incalculably interesting. What more could have been given for it than was in the gift of the Lord Jesus, who died for us that we might enjoy the riches of that inheritance that fadeth not away. It does fulfill, exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, the large desires and long indulged expectation of the people of God. All who enter up-

on it will doubtless say as the queen of the South did of the wisdom of Solomon, that the half had not been told them. Their highest expectations shall be infinitely surpassed, and their largest desires filled up to overflowing. Though one may have a larger cup and a brighter crown than another, there shall be no want in the heavenly world. Even the taunting persecutions of the wicked in this world will, in ways which none are now apprised of, contribute to make up the enjoyment of the Christian; and still more precious the afflictions of every kind endured in life shall, under the gracious management of the Lord, work out glory for those who are exercised under them; not only by making manifest the discomfiture of the wicked, but by the soul-cheering displays of sovereign grace, by which the saint has been enabled to endure the cavilings and buffetings of the wicked.

This heavenly Canaan was referred to and illustrated to God's ancient people by the earthly Canaan which was vouchsafed unto them, in which they had the promise of very many great and precious blessings; all of which have something richly to correspond with them in the rest remaining for God's people. The continual recurrence of our holy Sabbath is also designed,

we have no doubt, as a perpetual reference to that everlasting day of rest, where sabbatic privileges and blessings shall be enjoyed in a most perfect state; where we may rest forever from our labor and disquietude; and we shall be enfranchised from sorrow, toil, and pain. There shall be realized the long looked for and long expected good, promised in all the dispensations of the will of Heaven to men, foretold by the prophets, as the reward of all those who do well, as the everlasting abode of just men made perfect through the blood of the Saviour; joining with Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and myriads of holy beings, who dwell around the throne, in the most intimate and delightful communion, to all eternity.

There shall be happily congregated the good men of all nations, and tongues, and kindred, of the whole earth; it matters not in what zone or lonely isle of earth they may have been born; it matters not whether Jewish or Gentile parents may have given them birth; it matters not what color the skin may be of, or what stations they may occupy in the relations of society; it matters not in what school they may have been educated, or to what sect they belonged; it matters not to what degradations they may have been re-

duced, or through what calamitous incidents they may have been called to pass; in a word, it matters not, though earth and hell oppose them, "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him:" Acts x. 35. John in speaking of the sacramental host above, after mentioning the hundred and forty-four thousand of the tribes of Israel sealed to glory, he says, "After this I beheld, and lo! a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes and palms in their hands:" Rev. vii. 9. All these continually ascribe salvation to God and the Lamb. "These are they which came up through great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heart. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears

from their eyes." And there shall be most joyfully celebrated, a glorious victory over the most perfect and eternal destruction of the last and most formidable enemy, death; who had reigned almost from the beginning of our history, with a grievously oppressive hand, devouring with the most unfeeling rapacity the successive generations of men. Now it shall be announced throughout the interminable ranks of eternal life, that there shall be no more death forever; by the resurrecting power of God, the graves of all the dead being emptied, the long confined prisoners being all now released by the sovereign fiat of Divine Omnipotence; the charnel-house torn down, its very foundations razed, and its materials all thrown to oblivion; so that not a vestige of mortality shall remain, but the fear of it, with the very sentiment of it, be eternally blotted out from the recollections of the living, and the whole sacramental host rejoice in glorious immortality; having "come unto Mount Zion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly of the church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect."

The society of the blessed above will be truly a numerous society; and every member of it will be holy, "not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish:" Eph. v. 27. The want of more holiness has been a standing charge against the members of the militant church, which we are sorry to think has not been as baseless as it should have been; yet we have no doubt but that even from the ranks of the more imperfect ones, who still prayed for pardon and looked to Jesus for help, will be found at last dwelling in the "city of the living God," giving glory to him who died for them and rose again, while their poor revilers, who perhaps with an external demeanor of more plausible morality, having died Deists, will sink to ruin. The Saviour says, "In my Father's house there are many mansions;" by which we understand that the entertainments will not only be ample, but spaciouly abundant. In those mansions pious saints shall rest from their labors, after wearisome scenes of sorrow, toil, and pain, in the earth.

Is it not enough to say of the rest that remains for the people of God, that it is heaven; it is the dwelling place of the Most High; the head-spring and the home of light, and life, and

love, and truth, and holiness, and all things else, that may be truly desirable and good?

III. To be convinced that this rest is, and that it is attainable by man, is the greatest advance towards earthly felicity; to have a certainty of realizing it, being an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for all the faithful. God has been pleased graciously to give it to believers by promise, and his promise being yea and amen, it is our duty as well as our privilege to exercise the most unshaken confidence in it. In proportion as we do this our assurance will be firm or feeble. On this subject very much has been written; and the views of theologians have been as different as on many other branches of polemic divinity. Some have contended that there can be almost no assurance to afford any special comfort to its possessor, but that absolute dubitation and uncertainty cannot be overcome. This we think is a great extreme; the opposite of which is blind confidence, bordering on presumption, often founded on mere flights of imagination, visions of fancy, or something no more substantial. Each of these is about equally to be avoided; yet there is a medium ground on this subject, both scriptural and rational, which is full of joy

and consolation to humble believers. Job, we think, enjoyed it when he was vexed, neglected, broken up in his circumstances, and greatly afflicted. His kinsfolk had forgotten him, his wife became cold, his children despised him, and his most intimate friends abhorred him; he was persecuted, afflicted and tormented, yet in the midst of all he had great consolation; and none can tell his joyful and triumphant anticipations, when he could say, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me:" Job xix. 25—27. These pious aspirations are the genuine products of heavenly hope; and must be more or less strong, in proportion to our faith; at least a measure of assurance is included in the very essence of faith.

To indulge in doubting the willingness of Christ to save, and the fullness of his salvation, is always wrong. But to persist in confidence of personal salvation, without abiding assurances of adoption, is certainly very dangerous, and unwarranted by the Scriptures. For mere for-

malists, bigots, or careless, self-conceited professors to talk of undoubted assurance of salvation, is certainly very unwarranted — rather an ostentatious parade of which, we fear, is sometimes made greatly to the discouragement of the truly godly; who are generally so modest, unpretending, and humble, as not to express even as strong confidence as they might be justified in doing. Those who are most desirous to make sure work for eternity are often afflicted, because they cannot claim the assurances to which others pretend. Though there may be very manifest discrepancies between their pretensions and lives, yet the diffident and declining Christian is unwilling to suspect them of rashness in their confidence. Talk about faith, in the absence of evidence, is vain and empty talk.

The promises of the Bible are made to particular characters, rather than to particular persons. To the characters for whom the promised blessings are prepared, they are infallibly certain. That every man has an agency in the formation of his character, few will dispute. In all that sense, man contributes to brightening his prospects, and rendering more certain his assurances of eternal felicity. The man of God, to some extent, has the elements of happiness in

his own heart. God, in his mercy and grace, has been pleased to implant it there.

Piety, the only thing that gives fitness for heaven, is itself inseparable from a great measure of joy, peace, and other constituents of future bliss. The fact that the future inheritance is a free and unmerited gift, is no objection to the idea of the certainty of its realization; with men, it is, to be sure, a very precarious dependence, to rely on their charity or mere gratuity. With too much propriety, the hospitalities of the world have been called cold hearted and faithless; the most favored beneficiaries of which often feel the pinch of pressing want; but with God, we may as certainly calculate that he will be merciful and liberal, as that he will be just.

The certainty of the future rest of the righteous is vouchsafed unto them by the resurrection and ascension of the blessed Saviour; both of which authenticate and prove the truth of the Scriptures, and clearly illustrate the fact of a future state. The time and manner of being introduced into it, we should leave entirely with the Giver; whether the path of our pilgrimage thither be a pleasant or a painful one, should be a matter of small import: the afflictions of the present state being so inconsiderable, in compar-

ison with the felicity and joy that is in reversion for the true believer.

The "*assurance of faith*," and "full assurance of understanding," spoken of in the Scriptures, with "the assurance of hope," cannot only mean a confidence of present enjoyment, but includes necessarily the idea of a future inheritance. Being children of God, hence heirs, and joint heirs with Christ, the certainty of whose inheriting glory none will question. Christians are the objects of sure and immutable promises, parties to covenant engagements, and subjects of impressions, foretastes, desires, hopes, and expectations, all contemplating the reception of, or inheritance of, perfect rest. The Psalmist, taking a reflection beyond the boundary of time, says, "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness; I will be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness:" Psalms xvii. 15. Here we have the first fruits, hereafter, in glory, we will reap the entire crop to the glory of God's grace.

IV. It remains for us to consider why this rest still remaineth. That the immediate enjoyment of it is every way desirable, all agree; for it, we should constantly strive, laying aside every weight, and the sin that doth beset; we should run with persevering patience the race that is

set before us. Yet Infinite Wisdom sees it best to defer our actual entrance on the possession of it until a future time. The excellency of the Divine arrangement, in this respect, is manifest, when we consider that sanctification is a progressive work; hence, even those who may be justified, regenerated, and adopted into the favor and family of God, are still in an immature and imperfect state, being at first but babes in Christ, and every step in their progress adds largely to the crown of their rejoicing. We are exhorted to add to our faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity. It may be contended that every Christian has at least a measure of these; be it so, he may still add thereto, and abound more and more in these, and every other good word and work, that he may thrive, and lay up treasure in heaven, to be enjoyed in eternity; so as to make it evidently interesting to the people of God to have their stay in earth protracted for a season, that they may be disciplined awhile, by trials and sufferings, and fully prove, by personal experience, that there is no solid rest or joy to be found in the earth; which, owing to the deceitful flatteries of the world, it is hard to learn. We are extremely apt to be beguiled into the notion, that

the world can afford some sterling pleasure. It is the Christian's privilege to overcome the world, by striving to obtain such a sublimated state of feeling and affection, as to be elevated above the frowns or favors of it; and to be so engrossed with nobler and better things, as to be comparatively indifferent about its gifts or its pleasures.

Glorification is that act of God's grace by which Christians are taken into the immediate presence of God's glory in heaven. In order to their being susceptible of that great, soul-elevating work, they must be sanctified. We are told "that holiness becomes the house of God." We are exhorted to perfect it in His fear, and are assured that he chastens us "for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness." Also, that we should "follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:" Hebrews xii. 14.

An ardent desire for holiness of heart, or a hungering and thirsting after righteousness, is a disposition absolutely essential to the proper relish of heavenly joy; indeed, while God exists, and is a holy being, it will be impossible for man to be happy in his presence without holiness. His bare presence, as enjoyed by the heavenly host, would inflict infinite shame and everlasting

contempt upon depraved and unholy beings; for such is his nature, that He can but look with the utmost detestation, and most deeply cutting and soul-withering disapprobation, on sin, and finally, impenitent sinners.

To afford us opportunities of laying up a large and invaluable treasure above, to become strong in the Lord and the power of his might, and to add many brilliant stars to the crown of our future rejoicing, we have time afforded "to those, who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, (by toil and suffering to be the better prepared for, and have stronger assurances of,) eternal life;" knowing that God has appointed "glory, and honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good." This rest is kept in reversion, that the heirs apparent to it may have ample opportunity to contemplate it in every aspect, and be fully convinced of its entire superiority to every thing else, and of its most wise, and glorious, and perfect adaptation to their highest possible felicity.

Furthermore, Christians are left awhile in the earth, because their Master hath need of them here, to be lights in the world, and salt of the earth, and to be laborers together with him in the accomplishment of His grand purposes here

below. God performs his great designs of salvation, mainly through human instrumentality. When we consider the greatness of his work, and its importance to the well-being of our race, we see the propriety of saints lingering and laboring on these mortal shores awhile. When we consider the darkness that covers the earth, and the gross darkness the people, and that it is the purpose of God to have it dispelled by the power of the Gospel, and to disseminate the true light of life and salvation to the ends of the earth. Further, considering that men are not only *involved* in darkness, but *in love* with it, and hate the light, and avoid it. We can see what a more than mammoth undertaking it is to enlighten the world, even to that extent that will render practicable such improvement as is essential to salvation.

Those who have undertaken the more immediate contact with human ignorance, are better prepared to speak of the arduous difficulty of both the mental and moral illumination and improvement of the benighted millions of the earth's inhabitants: all which directly belongs to the work which Almighty God proposes to accomplish in the earth, through the instrumentality of men. To effect this, vast amounts of

labor and means have been exhausted already; literary and moral instruction have been happily combined, especially in Sunday Schools; and much has been done of late years, but still so much remains undone, that the work seems barely commenced. Hordes of human beings still dwell in darkness and the shadow of death: not only the ignorance, but the guilt and corruption, accumulated like mountains piled on mountains, and awful sinks of depravity incredible to be told. To remove these, also, belongs to the gracious purpose of Heaven; a view of which, by mere human wisdom, it would be as likely to conceive it proper to call angels down from heaven to the important scenes of labor and conflict, as to call laborers from the field to heaven in the condition of the work. But God, in his inscrutable power and wisdom, often builds up and advances, by what human wisdom would pronounce certain destruction. Hence good men should be resigned to the will of Heaven, to go at His call, or remain to labor and suffer awhile for the good of others.

Christianity inspires the truest patriotism, the noblest self-denial, and disinterested benevolence. Its possessors will not think of living for themselves alone, but for Him who died for them, and

rose again, endeavoring, whatsoever they do, to do all to the glory of God, and for the salvation of priceless souls. All believe that the well meant labor of pious men in the earth is not in vain, that incalculable good may be accomplished through this instrumentality, which, without it, might be undone forever, which should doubtless be a motive to the most flaming zeal and heroic effort. When we cast an exploring eye over the vast fields already white to harvest, and see how our blessed Immanuel's cause is suffering for want of laborers, we can clearly see it proper to remain and labor longer before we go to rest; knowing that if we should spend myriads of years in toil and labor in the earth, it will be no infringement upon the days of heavenly rest, which shall be boundless as eternity to come.

V. We conclude by endeavoring to show why this rest is only for the people of God, by a gospel conversion. Heaven was made for, and adapted only to the happiness of the righteous; none others can taste its joys. There can be no greater folly, than to think of being saved without being converted, or of being happy without being holy. Holiness is the life and element of heavenly bliss: God is holy, his throne is holy,

the angels that surround his throne are holy, the redeemed from the earth are only the just made perfect; hence we may be sure, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord in peace; if we have it not in ourselves, (as no man has had since Adam fell) we must have it in a divinely authorized and competent surety, such as Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the sinner's Friend, in whom alone we can truly stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory and favor of our God. Those who obstinately persist in impenitency and unbelief, notwithstanding the great love of God for the world, the ample provision made in Christ for salvation, the calls and invitations of the Gospel, the affectionate strivings and powerful drawings of the Holy Ghost, with the admonitions, warnings, and reproofs of God's word, his providence and faithful ministers. Such may be truly said to exclude themselves, and will doubtless throw themselves under the grievous necessity of exclaiming most bitterly in ruin, that they "knew their duty, but they did it not." Hence, they cannot have even that meagre extenuation of their distress afforded by the reflection, that others caused it; the whole blame, reproach, and censure of it, with all its ponderous and fearful magnitude, must press, and burn,

and bear with mountain weight upon the solitary, naked conscience, and most tender sensibilities of the poor sinner alone; and there will be none in heaven, or earth, or hell, to help or pity him. All will say, amen, and award it as his due. None have any right to, or relish for it, but the godly, who have been truly converted from their fallen state and depravity; having been convinced of their lost condition, sincerely repented and believed in Christ, been justified, renewed by the Holy Ghost, and adopted into Divine favor, so as to have the love and spirit of Christ in their hearts; testifying, and assuring them that they are the children of God; hence feel a welcome, having a wedding garment on; being able to feel that they have an interest in the things of the Lord, humbly to claim him as their Father; that the heavenly rest is their own Father's house, therefore, their own proper home and eternal dwelling place; where their brethren, their own real kindred, dwell, who had served in the same labor and conflicts, fought in the same battles, endured the same privations, crosses, and trials, on the earth, with whom, therefore, they could familiarly and sweetly enjoy the precious communion and fellowship of their common Father's house. But destitute of sterling piety, heaven

itself, with all its untold felicity, and sources of delight, cannot make man happy. The trite proverb, that "what is one man's meat, is another's poison," is not inapplicable here.

To one of fine health and appetite, after a season of privation and abstinence, rest, with a sumptuous banquet, would be truly grateful to his relish for entertainment and comfort; but to the sickly and morbid appetite, it would be quite the reverse; as it would be an intolerable annoyance for a man of deranged and sickly appetite to be confined in a refectory, most sumptuously furnished with even the most delicate and luscious rarities, such as would be to the hearty and sensual voluptuary a most precious treat. So with the unconverted, whose moral sensibilities are not only dull and vitiated, but the entire disposition and feeling of both head and heart are averse and deeply hostile to every elementary constituent of the heavenly rest; the complete intellectual, as well as moral qualities of the man, being so thoroughly perverted by sin as to hate virtue—which is the real ground and element of true felicity—and love and cherish vice, which is not only inseparable from woe and wretchedness, but the very thing out of which hell itself is made; the only combustible susceptible of its

flames, and without which there could be no misery in the vast dominions of Jehovah. It is sin alone that gives all the flame, and heat, and horror to hell; without it, there would be no deathless worm, or quenchless fire. Every idea of misery, shame, loss, despair, and want is a correlative of sin; which could no more be without it than a creature could be without a creator. The wide gate and the broad way were originally opened by sin, in the most flagrant contravention of the will, desire, and purpose of Heaven; and continue to be kept open and beaten, by the no less reprehensible habits of impenitency and unbelief. In this same thing, signified by the little three lettered word sin, we find the entire cause of all the lamentation and weeping, the disgrace, wars, pestilence, famine, with all uncleanness, idolatry, hatred, wrath, seditions, heresies, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and all other abominations which induce scandal and misery in the great empire of God.

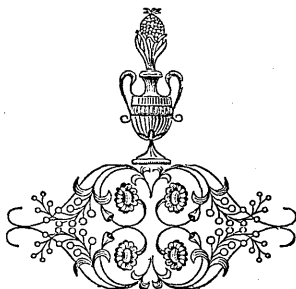
Where sin is approved, there can be no holiness, no happiness, no heavenly rest. It is a palpable illusion of the devil, for men to talk about the prospect of future rest, while they live in the allowed practice or maintenance of any known error or sin. That such cannot, consist-

only, even desire heaven, we think, is very demonstrable. Strictly speaking, we can only *desire* future bliss, in proportion as we desire present holiness; with personal conformity to, and the universal triumphs of truth and righteousness. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God:" Romans viii. 7, 8. Hence none can enjoy God while that unreasonable enmity exists; which includes deeply rooted dislike and hostility as well to his natural character and perfections as to his official character and government. This enmity constitutes a most impregnable barrier to an entrance into the rest that remains for the people of God.

Saints desire to have their children and friends go with them; all heaven desires it too, but only on terms which will comport with God's glory and the felicity of the whole. Nothing unholy can be admitted there. If it is thought hard to become holy, we are certain that it is just as hard to get to heaven. Without Christ we can do neither; but "if God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things:" Rom.

viii. 31, 32. The Lord being our helper, we should not be discouraged in attempting any duty he enjoins; as David did, who said to his Maker, "When thou saidst seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, thy face Lord, will I seek:" Psalms xxvii. 8. In this he did not consult flesh and blood, or cavil about ability or inability, but at the Lord's command, and in His strength he engaged promptly in seeking his face and favor. Let every one do likewise, and it shall not be in vain. In acknowledgement of confidence in Divine help, he says "Give us help from trouble; for vain is the help of man. Through God we shall do valaintly, for he it is that shall tread down our enemies:" Psalms lx. 12. Having such an almighty and willing Friend to help us, we should not despair, but be strong in the Lord and the power of his might, and strive to enter in at the strait gate, and press on through crosses and trials towards the mark of holiness, for the prize of the everlasting rest; not doubting but that through grace, being dutiful and faithful unto death, we shall gloriously triumph in the name of the Lord, and be permitted at last to wear the crown of righteousness, and sit down with Abraham, and venerable Patriarchs, the pious Martyrs, holy Prophets, and Apostles,

and with the innumerable company of the redeemed from among all nations, in the rest that remains for the people of God; there with all these, and better still, with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to enjoy sweet and precious communion and fellowship for ever and ever.



The reader will correct the following prominent errors:

Page	62,	5th line	from top, for <i>future</i> , read <i>fortune</i> .
"	69,	8th "	" bottom for <i>for it is</i> , read, <i>it is</i> .
"	79,	5th "	" top, for <i>in</i> , read <i>by</i> .
"	118,	3d "	" bottom, for <i>and</i> , read <i>as</i> .
"	118,	4th "	" bottom, omit <i>as</i> .
"	212,	8th "	" bottom, for <i>inexhaustless</i> , read <i>exhaustless</i> .
"	219,	10th "	" top, for <i>delirious</i> , read <i>delicious</i> .
"	244,	5th "	" top, for <i>o'ershewing</i> read <i>overshadowing</i> .
"	269,	2d "	" top, for <i>virtue</i> , read <i>victim</i> .
"	280,	14th "	" bottom, for <i>clog</i> , read <i>cloy</i> .
"	369,	9th "	" " for <i>or</i> , read <i>as</i> .
"	395,	9th "	" " omit <i>the</i> .

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